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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-96-080 *24 April 1996*

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Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: Jibril Calls For Boycotting PNC's 'Peres Session'

JN2304120796 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1330 GMT 22 Apr 96

["Special appeal" by Ahmad Jibril, secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command; place and date not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. O heroic people of martyrs. The plot is growing and expanding, with the aim of stifling the Palestinian people's struggle and jihad, by calling for the so-called Palestine National Council [PNC] meeting. The PNC has nothing to do with legitimacy. It lacks revolutionary legitimacy, because the capitulationists have stopped the revolution and opted for submission; it lacks political legitimacy, because the [Palestinian] Authority men bypassed the alliance of Palestinian groups and figures and allied themselves with the Zionist enemy against our people and nation; and it lacks democratic legitimacy, because no free elections were held for our people in the diaspora.

O people of martyrs: This council is a parasitic structure that does not represent our people. It has no legitimacy. Everything issued by it is futile and nonbinding. This council now represents the most dangerous link in the plot. It is being held to implement the Zionist enemy dictates and the U.S. desire to cancel the Palestine National Charter as a prelude to canceling the Palestinian homeland and legitimizing the perpetual existence of occupation and Zionism over our sacred national soil as a springboard to continue aggression against the Arab and Islamic nations.

O people of martyrs: The people of the revolution, the intifadah, and sacrifices will not condone this plot and treason. They will be able, God willing, to bury this plot as they were always able to overcome their ordeals and tragedies. They will be able to eject the plotters and the plots from among them.

O our people everywhere. Millions of Arabs and Muslims the world over are looking at us at these hours. The heroic people of Lebanon are triumphing over the plot despite the massacres. Our people's role at this moment is to boycott the PNC's Peres session, the session of consecrating humiliation and capitulation. Let us boycott the canceling-of-the-homeland council, let us boycott all those who want to cancel the charter. Let us boycott all those who attend the Peres session, the session of canceling the homeland, the session of destroying the present and the future of our coming generations, who are looking for freedom and independence.

Our belief in God is absolute and faultless. Our faith in our people's ability is unlimited. Based on this faith, we assert that the plot will not be allowed to pass, that the plotters will face further humiliation and ignominy, and that victory will be the lot of the faithful who are offering their souls which ascend to heaven to realize the freedom of our Palestinian homeland. Victory will be the lot of these caravans of martyrs, and the lot of those who adhere to the liberation of Palestine and to defeating the Zionist enemy.

As for the plot and the plotters, they will come to realize the destruction they will be facing.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat on Amending Charter, Jordan, Hamas

JN2304131496 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 22 Apr 96 p 27

[Interview with Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasir 'Arafat by Tawfiq Abu-Bakr in Gaza; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Abu-Bakr] What do you expect the Palestine National Council [PNC] to achieve in this session?

['Arafat] This session has special significance because we haven't been able to meet for a long time. This is because there was no place to hold the session and taking into consideration the situation in the region. The last session was held in Algiers in September 1991. The attendees then unanimously endorsed our participation in the Madrid conference based on President George Bush's land-for-peace initiative. The initiative was also based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. We were first not allowed to participate but we finally managed to participate and the PLO was finally able to publicly participate in the meeting.

At the same time, important developments took place on the Palestinian track. The Oslo agreement was concluded and approved by the PLO Central Council. You were there and you wrote about this. A second Oslo agreement was concluded. In addition, the final status negotiations are approaching. All these developments require that we call a PNC session to debate these developments that affect the Palestinian people's future and destiny. The PNC will also debate what was agreed upon with the Israeli side and what we signed in Washington. The PNC will further debate the request we will make in light of the changes that were unanimously endorsed by the PNC in its sessions between 1968-1996. We have endorsed the establishment of a democratic state in which Muslims, Christians, and Jews coexist. In

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1974, the 12th PNC session endorsed the establishment of an authority over any land that is liberated or from which Israel withdraws. The successive PNC sessions have introduced great changes to our political programs. These changes came to a head in the 19th session in 1988 when the PNC endorsed a peace initiative and a declaration of independence. In light of these developments, I will request that the PNC amend our charter and documents to make them compatible with our commitments and pledges toward the peace process.

[Abu-Bakr] Is the declaration of independence fit to be the new national charter?

['Arafat] The PNC unanimously approved the independence document in Algiers. The members then asked me to brief the UN General Assembly on the results of the session, including our peace initiative. As you know, I couldn't go to New York and we asked that the UN General Assembly meet in Geneva. Thus, the debate moved to Geneva and the UN General Assembly held a session there. I held a meeting and a news conference in Geneva in which I made the new Palestinian position very clear. At 0100 Geneva time the U.S. Administration announced that it will open a dialogue with the PLO. We were told about this through the Egyptians. George Shultz made the announcement on television.

[Abu-Bakr] Mr. President, do you believe that the Palestinian Independence Declaration as a new national charter will be a factor for pooling Palestinian ranks?

['Arafat] I do not need any factor. When the Independence Declaration was unanimously approved by all Palestinian organizations, it became the new constitution of the Palestinian people.

[Abu-Bakr] What will become of the old charter?

['Arafat] In the holy Koran, a verse cancels previous ones. If this is the case in the divine constitution, how cannot we apply the same to positive law? You may remember that I used the word "Caduc" at my news conference at that time to describe the charter. It is a French word meaning obsolete. Our political programs and the major amendments to them guided our moves in general and made the charter far from political application.

[Abu-Bakr] Do you not believe that the approval of the Independence Declaration as a new charter or of a basis for a charter within the framework of the Independence Declaration will raise a sharp argument in Israel on the eve of the elections? And will that meet the requirements of abrogating provisions in the charter calling for Israel's destruction?

['Arafat] The Israeli elections were scheduled to take place five months after their present date, and we prepared for the PNC session before an earlier date for the elections was set in order to meet our commitments. The independence Declaration does not call for Israel's destruction and it contains nothing that should be abrogated.

At the same time, we are working for our cause and people. An independent state with holy Jerusalem as its capital is a declared Palestinian goal, and we will continue to work to achieve that goal and make Jerusalem a capital for two states like Rome, which is the capital of the Vatican and Italy. Major forces in Israel, including leftist parties, prominent personalities, large parts of the Labor Party, and figures from the Likud — like the Tel Aviv mayor — support the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in order to achieve a just and balanced peace. I would like to say that Yitzhaq Shamir attended Madrid peace conference with PLO participation through a certain framework.

[Abu-Bakr] But he said in his memoirs that he had no intention to achieve peace and that he wanted to prolong the negotiations for 10 years to Judaize the land and to leave nothing for negotiations.

['Arafat] But it is he who gave the initial approval of convening a peace conference in which the PLO would participate. I would like to say something for the first time. Menahem Begin offered through [former] President Anwar al-Sadat to hand over the Gaza Strip.

[Abu-Bakr] Some people say that it is necessary to elect the PLO Executive Committee members from the PNC members through a secret direct ballot to entrench democracy, meet the requirements of the new era of building a new society, and end the cota system for the committee and the electoral slate that win through unanimous vote?

['Arafat] This is not part of our heritage, and we should go on with our traditions. We have our own norms that will not allow such matters.

[Abu-Bakr] Do you not think, Mr. President, that a new concept for national unity should be defined at this new phase? National unity should no longer mean unity and agreement among factions?

['Arafat] We must try as hard as we can to preserve the Palestinian factions and work on pooling our resources. I wish to say that if Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the Islamic Jihad did not reject the Oslo Agreement, then it would have been possible for them to join the authority. I made them an offer to join at an early stage. Because of that, some of their leaders split

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and ran in the elections, and they are now members of the Legislative Council which means they are members of the PNC.

[Abu-Bakr] But, brother president, I heard from their leaders that what you offered them was no more than a little piece, which does not correspond to their influence on the political scene?

['Arafat] This is not true. I offered them positions in the authority, at the highest level in the authority to the lowest rank in the national security forces.

[Abu-Bakr] You offered them a share that corresponds to their size?

['Arafat] Yes. The elections and the ballot boxes showed the real size of various forces, without any exaggerations.

[Abu-Bakr] But they say they boycotted the elections?

['Arafat] This is not true. They have eight seats on the Legislative Council.

[Abu-Bakr] My question remains: Does national unity mean the unity of the factions or the unity of the majority of people around specific objectives?

['Arafat] Both. We argue for the unity of the people and we urge all factions to rally around the Palestinian people's objectives. In the recent elections, our masses voted in favor of their major objective, that is the just peace.

[Abu-Bakr] Do you not think that it was a violation to consider the Legislative Assembly members as PNC members? According to the constitution, the PNC should meet first and then vote on accepting new members one at a time. This was the tradition in previous PNC sessions.

['Arafat] There is no violation of the law. The situation is different from that which you describe. No one from the opposition who talk about this issue can teach me law. I have been a member of the PNC since its foundation. I was an elected member representing the Palestinian community in Kuwait. I was one of 18 representatives elected by Palestinians there for the first PNC session.

[Abu-Bakr] I know that, and I wrote about it today in the Arab papers.

['Arafat] Thank you. Back to the subject. According to the bylaws, elections must be held to choose PNC members whenever that is possible. It was possible to do so in Gaza and the northern provinces. Elected PNC members come from the diaspora, some of them may be from Fatah, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, or other factions. In Lebanon, we held elections in the camps to elect PNC members through the popular committees and so forth.

[Abu-Bakr] Can the current PNC with its configuration which contains members who are directly elected by the people and others who are appointed survive?

['Arafat] Yes. This is possible. This can be found in many countries. In Egypt, there are members who are appointed and others who are elected.

[Abu-Bakr] But there are not many who are appointed?

['Arafat] The principle is there. The principle of appointment of members is there and the number of those appointed is not important.

[Abu-Bakr] I conducted a lengthy interview with you in 1990 and we discussed the possibility of electing a PNC by direct suffrage. At the time you agreed to work to achieve this. Do you still support such a stand?

['Arafat] Yes. I hope that elections would take place in the places where Palestinians reside to elect a PNC that has a popular base.

[Abu-Bakr] Have you initiated practical steps in this direction?

['Arafat] Yes, and I hope that in the next elections, the Palestinian abroad will vote as do the Lebanese who lives outside their homeland.

[Abu-Bakr] Does this mean you hope the next PNC will be elected in one way or the other?

['Arafat] Yes, God willing. You should not forget that the PNC remained in office for a period which went far beyond its term in view of special circumstances. This will be its last session. A new PNC should be formed within the next six-month period. We hope it will be formed in accordance with a broader election, democratic, and representational formula.

[Abu-Bakr] What about dialogue with Hamas?

['Arafat] The dialogue is suspended. We held a dialogue with them in Cairo. We reached agreement on some points. However, they did not respect the agreement. Dialogue continues with the other Palestinian factions. Brother Tawfiq, you now participate in this expanded and comprehensive national dialogue. You started this dialogue in Amman and it is now continuing here in Gaza. This Palestinian umbrella should comprise all the sons of the Palestinian people.

[Abu-Bakr] What about the charges against Jordan with respect to Hamas, its leaders, and its activities?

['Arafat] We absolutely do not accuse Jordan. We said that the Hamas command is in Jordan. We asked the

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brothers to takes measures against them because they act from Amman in a manner that conflicts with the agreement we and they had signed with the Israeli side.

[Abu-Bakr] But do Jordanian officials say that they are waiting for tangible proof so that they may act and refer them to trial?

['Arafat] At the request of my brothers in Amman, I sent a security delegation. The delegation held several meetings there. We decided to maintain contacts, and we gave them many confessions.

[Abu-Bakr] I hope you will be open-minded as to what I will tackle now. I am of those who work in the human rights field. What about the Palestinian Authority's human rights violations, the many arrests and tortures many human rights organizations speak about?

['Arafat] You can visit any detainees tonight and conduct interviews with them without any restrictions. I will facilitate your visit now, if you want. The families of the detainees visited their sons and said they were being well treated. With all frankness, I tell you that some violations may take place. We tackle every case as soon as we know about it. There are erroneous actions. We tackle the cases we learn about. You should not forget that some of the detainees opened fire on the police who came to interrogate or to arrest them, and many policemen were wounded.

[Abu-Bakr] Are you prepared to receive delegations from human rights organizations to inspect the human rights situation?

['Arafat] Yes, without any hesitation and we will provide all the necessary facilities.

[Abu-Bakr] How do you assess the performance of the authority after this stage? How is the process of moving from the revolution to the state proceeding? Do you think that the revolutionaries are fit to build a state?

['Arafat] What we are doing is a miracle. We were handed over a homeland that was destroyed entirely. The infrastructure — including streets, telephone lines, electrical power, and water supplies — was destroyed. We had no port, airport, or schools. Our schools are working three shifts a day. There is a great progress in the field of construction although the donor states are not fulfilling their promises.

[Abu-Bakr] What do the donor states say to justify their failure to keep their promises?

['Arafat] They do not say anything convincing. This is a normal practice for the donor states when they deal with the Third World countries, of which we are part. They are not doing this to us only; we are no exception.

[Abu-Bakr] There are qualified people who built states and established huge institutions in the Arab world. Why are they reluctant to help build their country?

['Arafat] To be fair, this is not the case. The construction drive we see in Gaza and the West Bank, where 36,000 workers are employed, is done with Palestinian money. There are 12 bank branches and scores of Palestinian companies. The airport is being built by two companies, one Palestinian, the other Egyptian. The port is being built by European — French and Dutch — and Palestinian companies. The communications sector will be operated by a Palestinian public company. We adopted privatization and economic freedom.

[Abu-Bakr] But, Mr. President, can the men of the revolution build a state? Or do we need a new kind of men?

['Arafat] Why has no one posed this question to Nelson Mandela, Mugabe, 'Abd-al-Nasir, Samora Machel? Their parties and men were in government and are still in government. So was the case with Nicaragua and the Sandinist front. We welcome any qualified people who come from abroad to help build the homeland.

[Abu-Bakr] Why have they not come yet?

['Arafat] Some have entered the homeland, others are coming.

[Abu-Bakr] The reaction to the events in al-Najah University was very negative. How do you explain that?

['Arafat] I apologized and this was an unprecedented move. I apologized to the students and staff and they gave me a very warm reception. Those who were responsible for storming the university were punished.

[Abu-Bakr] Let us move to the Arab situation. Do you not believe that the final status negotiations require the formulation of new Palestinian-Arab relations to invest the Arab force in the best possible way?

['Arafat] We have succeeded in restoring our relations with most of the Arab states. Our relations with Kuwait are still severed. I extend a hand to them [the Kuwaitis], for the Palestinian people should not pay this dear price as if they were the ones who occupied Kuwait. I once again extend a hand of reconciliation to our people in Kuwait.

[Abu-Bakr] Do not you believe that time is appropriate now to call for an Arab summit to discuss the new situation at the threshold of the next stage of peace negotiations?

['Arafat] I called for this several times in my speeches, including my call at the Arab foreign ministers' confer-

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ence on Jerusalem. That was the first Arab meeting on Jerusalem.

[Abu-Bakr] Are there any signs on the improvement of relations with Syria?

['Arafat] Yes, there are positivsigns from the brothers in Syria, and we highly appreciate them.

[Abu-Bakr] Is it true that they have requested consultations with the Palestinian delegation to negotiations on the water issue to benefit from its studies?

['Arafat] Yes, there are other signs, including the recent release of detainees, and other several issues. There was also coordination between the Palestinian and Syrian delegations in Barcelona.

[Abu-Bakr] Did they release Fatah's funds and property in Syria?

['Arafat] We are still waiting for this.

[Abu-Bakr] There was a preliminary meeting in Geneva on 19 April at the invitation of the cooperation institution [mu'assasat al-ta'awun] to discuss the possibility of holding a conference for the Palestinian expatriates and the Palestinians' contribution to building their homeland. It is a conference that has nothing to do with politics, so, why did you oppose this conference and why is this sensitivity from any conference abroad?

['Arafat] I did not oppose this conference at all. I only called on them to hold the meeting here in Gaza, where the Palestinian economists held their conference, in order to acquaint themselves with the tasks of construction and development on the ground. The Palestinians now have a homeland despite all restrictions, why do not they hold their conference in it. The homeland is calling them.

[Abu-Bakr] Do you fear the possibility of holding a meeting abroad for some PNC members, such as the meeting called for by Salah Salah, as quoted by AL-USBU' AL-'ARABI, and for nationalist figures, as called for by Dr. Hisham Sharabi, on the eve of the PNC session or a short time after it?

['Arafat] These calls will not succeed. They could not do this even when we held our PNC session in Amman in November 1984 in the absence of several factions. So, how will they succeed after the world has changed and the authority was established in the homeland? There will be no room for such moves and devastating secessionist ideas. The march is proceeding ahead, supported by God and the people. We have no choice but to achieve victory and to establish an independent state with holy Jerusalem as its capital. When I used to say that the state is a stone's throw away, many people thought I was exaggerating. What would they say now as the flag flutters high over our liberated cities forever? This is only the beginning, after which there will be more, God willing.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat on Charter Amendment, Bombings, Other Issues

JN2304193796 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 23 Apr 96

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun and Mu'in Shadid in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Yasir 'Arafat said that we have respect for other people's opinions and for democracy and are pleased to see everybody participating in the current 21st session of the Palestine National Council [PNC] in Gaza. This came in the remarks President 'Arafat made during the evening session of the PNC at the Rashad al-Shawwa Cultural Center in Gaza. President 'Arafat said that at the request of the PNC, the PLO Central Council agreed in advance to the Oslo 1 agreement, including the mutual recognition between the PLO and the Israeli Government, noting that a change will take place in the articles of the Palestinian National Charter.

President 'Arafat added: Your PLO Central Council said yes to the Oslo 1 agreement and to the National Authority. He pointed out that the Islamic conference in Dakar also abrogated the Jihad decision and asserted that all revolutions reached agreements, including the one reached between the brothers in Egypt and the British.

'Arafat went on: If people have one objection to the Oslo agreement, I have 10 objections. There is no such agreement in which only one party gains. President 'Arafat added: Do we want the Palestinian dream to continue or not? The president disclosed that we have O.A.S [Algerian Secret Army Organization], as well as clues that some of the recent operations in Israel were carried out in cooperation with the O.A.S in Israel.

In his remarks, President 'Arafat also tackled the issue of the three Israeli officers, who were sent to an Israeli military court for helping perpetrators to carry out the recent Dezingoff operation.

President 'Arafat then talked about the British Jew who carried out an operation at al-Quds hotel recently, announcing that we want a democratic state in which Muslims, Christians, and Jews can coexist. He also asserted that a special session to amend the Palestinian National Charter will be held in Gaza tomorrow, Wednesday [24 April].

Jamal al-Surani, Secretary of the PLO Executive Committee, said that the National Charter is not sacred in

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the Palestinian view and announced that he supports the issuance of a new National Charter, program, and statement. Many other speeches will be delivered during the PNC session here. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: PNC To Debate National Charter Amendment 24 Apr

JN2404092696 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The third meeting of the Palestine National Council [PNC] ended at dawn today. Many members delivered short speeches in which they stressed the need for Israel to abide by what has been agreed on and signed and to stop settlement activity. They also stressed the need to lift the Israeli military siege imposed on our people. They reviewed their different views on the amendment of the National Charter.

The PNC is scheduled to continue today the 21st Independence and Homeland Construction session, which is held for the first time under the National Authority in the homeland. Today's session will be devoted to debating the amendment of the National Charter in line with the historic and important phase experienced by our people.

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Algeria

Algeria: Employers Alarmed at Delays in Liberalization of Economy

LD2304152996 Algiers LIBERTE in French 12-13 Apr 96 p 2

[Editorial: "Employers Sound the Alarm"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Delays in the liberalization process could undermine the use of funds obtained from the rescheduling of the debt. Private employers met on Thursday [11 April] to discuss numerous issues ranging from the failure of two million workers to pay their national insurance contributions, the difficulty of controlling the black market, the delays in the privatizations, and the problem of finding buyers for some [state-owned] companies, in addition to redefining the economic orientations toward a market economy. The discussions inevitably highlighted the precariousness of the situation and also gave a less than encouraging account of the economic reality in the country.

In contrast to official statements, assessments and words of self-satisfaction, the private operators chose to sound the alarm. "We can witness, and this is largely the case now, a real corruption of the very concept of a market economy, in other words the invasion of foreign products; hence purely and simply the disappearance of national production," Mr. Haddidi, president of the Association of Company Managers [ACE], told us.

After denouncing the marginalization of the private sector, even its exclusion from the field of investments, Mr. Haddidi said that Algeria's prospects do not mean that "it has to become a dumping ground for foreign consumer goods, especially at a time when social categories [as received] are facing a degradation of their purchasing power."

The representative of ACE believes it is time we adapted to the globalization of the economy where only competitiveness can help create jobs and wealth with a view to meeting the needs of the domestic market. In other words, the privatization process has been plagued by delays and efforts will have to be made to make up for these delays — otherwise the funds made obtained from the rescheduling of the debts could be put to bad use.

The private employers, who are opposed to allocating funds to stabilize the finances of state-owned companies, especially as these efforts have not produced the desired effects, have stressed the importance of a tax reform which would give priority to the introduction of inducements for the creation of jobs. If privatization is linked to political preconditions, as several employers were keen to point out, the road could be very long indeed.

All private businessmen believe that a set of measures will have to be taken, including one that would ensure cohesion in terms of customs duties. They also suggest that financing facilities be offered to the productive sector and that all bureaucratic constraints be lifted first, and also that the government stop once and for all marginalizing private businesses.

As regards the banking sector, the private employers have deplored the absence of a real privatization policy as well as the obvious hesitations in drawing up a genuine reform of the banking system.

The National Union of Public Contractors [UNEP] argues that the sale of state-owned companies could be very costly. "We must first reduce the sale costs and then stabilize the finances of the companies in deficit," said Mr. Mekideche. He added that there are at present obstructions at the level of the ruling spheres. "Who can take the initiative of cutting the sale price?," he asked. "Nobody," he replied. "The situation is such that this person could be accused of selling off state-owned companies," the president of the UNEP also said.

Regarding the recent campaign of arrests of company managers, Mr. Mekideche believes that "it does not only slow down the privatization process but it also tends to legitimize the reluctance of foreign investors to come to Algeria". He added that managers of state-owned companies should not be used as scapegoats to justify the poor performance of the Algerian economy. Similarly, a number of private employers expressed their concern about what they called the anarchy of the informal economy. The introduction of a tax on wealth is also being envisaged.

Is there a way of recovering some of the money circulating in the informal sector [black market]? As far as the representative of the employers is concerned this is now possible. In the meantime, the liberalization of external trade, the modernization of the customs, the administration and the property system emerge as the next challenges.

Will the government, which has just opened the tripartite talks [with trade union and employer representatives], follow their ideas through to their logical conclusion by involving the private sector in efforts aimed at reforming the national economy?

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Algeria: Statistics on Female Victims of Violence

96AF0031A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 8 Mar 96 p 13

[Article by Nadiyah Mihdid: "Algerian Women: Victims of Variously Designated Conflict; Attacks on Women's Rights Extended to Their Very Existence"]

[FBIS Translated Text] International Women's Day, the anniversary which is celebrated every year on 8 March, gives us cause to pause today to contemplate the bitter reality that has been imposed on women in Algeria. Many of us might ask why is it that Algerian women, not other Arab women, are going through this?

The answer lies in the horror to which Muslim Arab women in Algeria are being subjected. These women are being horribly slaughtered, and they are being subjected to rape and gang rape. They are also being enslaved in the camps which were set up by armed groups for their own use in Algeria's heartland.

"The killing of a young, beautiful, woman with a well-rounded figure is to me an offense most grave. Such a woman, wrongfully killed, having committed no sin, is, among all those who have fallen, the one who is most worthy." [Two lines of verse by] 'Umar ibn Abu Rabi'ah

As women worldwide take the time on International Women's Day to review and enumerate their accomplishments in strengthening their right to employment and their right to participate in the affairs of their countries, women in Algeria are gathering together to count the families of the victims of terrorism. They are coming together to count the number of girls, pregnant women, journalists, and teachers who lost their lives as a result of a political conflict for which they cannot be blamed. It is a political conflict they had nothing to do with. Women in Algeria, like women elsewhere in the world, are coming together. But whereas women worldwide are upholding the slogan of the Beijing Conference, calling for a woman's right to choose to terminate her own pregnancy or her right to equality, which is understood to mean different things, women in Algeria are coming together to demand their right to life.

As these words are being written, innocent women and children are being felled in villages and mountains and in the deprived neighborhoods of Algeria's capital and major cities, far away from the lights of the cameras of the international and local press. These people are victims of a vicious conflict between the institutions of authority, or the Algerian state, and armed groups that have been rejecting the regime. These armed groups resent the 30-year old regime with which they have been involved in conflict, a conflict caused by the piecemeal policies which threatened the government's existence as an effective force for dealing with the deadly events of October 1988. Under pressure from mainstream Algerians, the government reluctantly conducted a quick referendum on amending the 1976 constitution to introduce a multiparty parliamentary system. Such a system was actually introduced, and that, according to many political analysts and sociologists, destabilized the foundations of a state which is still in its infancy.

Numerous Designations

In less than 50 years civilian society in Algeria found itself held hostage to a conflict with numerous designations. The armed groups referred to the conflict as a "jihad" [holy war] that was being waged to establish a fundamentalist state. Others referred to it as one whose purpose was to lay the foundation of a pluralistic democracy. Furthermore, sociological studies described the conflict as the birthing process of a civilized, democratic state. The horrifying torture that is taking place in Algeria today, plus what appears to be the pleasure derived by those who mutilate victims' bodies, have nothing to do with the attitudes of emotionally balanced human beings. In fact, it may be said that the geniuses who are behind Hollywood's horror movies could not have conceived horror like that which is happening in Algeria.

What is extraordinary is that the criminals who are extinguishing the lives of Algerian women and men seem bent on making the poor in Algeria even poorer and intensifying their feelings of oppression and disgruntlement. They are doing that by targeting young women and men on more than one level. The targeted young men and women are usually their families' breadwinners and source of support.

Violence against women in Algeria is setting a precedent: it is targeting women because of their gender, and that has implications on the Arabs' imagination and reality. During 150 years of the French occupation Algerian women served as a protective stronghold for Algerian principles and trusted guardians of the Algerian identity, an identity that is Arab, Islamic, and even Berber. They safeguarded Algerian identity by strengthening family ties and raising the young.

The only experience which may be mentioned here, since it might be analogous to what Algerian women have been experiencing, is that of Muslim women in Bosnia and Herzegovina who were subjected to a campaign of sexual assaults. It must, nevertheless, be noted that the nature of the conflict and the religion of the aggressor are not the same in the two instances. The

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prophet, may God bless him and grant him salvation, advised Muslim men to be gentle in their treatment of Muslim women. But many people got matters confused, and there have been numerous transgressions. Some of the leaflets published by the armed groups and then distributed in Algerian cities and villages stated: "Once the enemy is killed, his property becomes yours." In this regard matters were not limited to the acquisition of material things. They went beyond that. The smiles of many young, unmarried women were extinguished, and their kind nature was destroyed. Not even married and pregnant women in vast areas of eastern, western, and central Algeria managed to escape that fate.

Many rape cases have not been acknowledged by families apprehensive about the honor of their unwed daughters or their married women. It is consequently difficult to know the number of rape victims who survived their ordeal. Some of the women who were raped were killed; their bodies were mutilated; and they were dismembered and their body parts scattered in open spaces.

In the villages many girls left their homes to stay in the homes of their paternal or maternal uncles in the large cities. They left their homes to preserve their own lives and to safeguard their families from possible harm. They were thereby sacrificing their own opportunities to study, to receive training, and to work — opportunities which were available to them in their own areas. To them, however, there was no time to think about fighting illiteracy or arming themselves with academic degrees. They had to ensure their own survival and to take precautions against the barbarism which has surrounded them and is pursuing them.

Similar Destinies

Many women in remote areas and poor neighborhoods where there is little security resorted to the chador or "hijab." They thought that by wearing a "hijab" they would be guaranteed the ability to go to school and to the university. And yet, wearing a "hijab" did not prevent many of them from meeting the same fate which their counterparts without a "hijab" had met. When the conflict between the armed groups and the government intensified starting in 1992, these armed groups resorted to threatening Algerian women via leaflets which were posted on the walls. The leaflets warned women of death if they did not wear the "hijab."

This drama written by someone unknown to Algerian women revealed a sociological and historic phenomenon that is new to Algerian society: the emigration of many women to European and neighboring Arab countries. Diplomatic sources in Britain did not confirm the number of women who emigrated because of the private nature of the women's residence in those countries. These women usually request political asylum [in the countries they go to when they leave Algeria] on the grounds that they are victims of a war whose name remains unknown.

Under conditions during which the language of communication was that of firearms and the blades of sharp, cold steel stained with the blood of innocent people, actions carried out by these groups are often countered by similar actions carried out by security officers who are entrusted with the task of enforcing the law. And that is even more serious because the conflict has become cankerous and the transgressions have become varied. The law which is supposed to be above all is now being trampled underfoot by all. Testimony given by the families and wives of numerous terrorists proved that they were affected by these transgressions. The hardline policies that were put in place to deal with this disease, which became widespread in Algerian society, fell through the cracks of the arbitrary detentions that occurred and the special centers that were set up for that purpose in the middle of the desert. Consequently, social life in the country shrank and shriveled, and terror and fear became widespread. People became suspicious of their neighbors, friends, and colleagues, and social ties between people were weakened. That is how women ended up in the crossfire in those battles described by many Algerians as "dirty."

Sociologists attributed the targeting of women in Algeria's ongoing political conflict to the fact that "reactionary forces" who are assassinating thinkers, literary figures, and poets are rejecting the achievements of Algerian women since independence, particularly their 14 percent participation in the work force, their 50 percent representation in the student body at schools and universities, and their 35 percent representation in the student body at graduate schools.

Many young Algerians blame women for holding positions in the work force. They blame them for what appeared to be the failure of the liberalization policy in the eighties. They also blame them for the the fact that an army of young, unemployed men, who represent a double-edged sword for Algeria, lack a vision of the future.

Marginalized Young Men

Drug use has become widespread among mainstream Algerians as a result of a stifling housing shortage and the inaccessibility of educational institutions. Consequently, adolescents feel shut out with no place to go but the walls of al-Humah buildings where they can huddle to find warmth and solace. There, adolescents

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can express themselves and complain, sometimes indignantly and other times in a painful lament. They complain about the grief that is eating them up, the hope that they lost, and the society that is rejecting them and making fun of them. Many Algerian sociologists concur in saying that what Algeria is experiencing today is part of the revenge for this group that suffered from marginalization and deprivation. The murder of Nabilah Jahyin, president of Sayhah al-Nisa' [Women's Outcry] Society in Tizi Ouzo Province east of the capital, was the first time the women's movement was targeted by this group.

Algerian women have often been accused by armed groups of backing the existing regime. But anyone who has been following the course of political events in Algeria since independence would realize that the women's movement, which has evolved since then, was one of those groups that was challenging the political regime all these years and continuously demanding full civil rights. It is known that the women's movement is one of the civil opposition tendencies that was active in its opposition, particularly in the seventies. Other similar civil opposition tendencies are the Islamic tendency, which gave rise to the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS], and the Berber tendency. The latter called for recognition of the Amazighi dimension of Algeria's national identity. Finally, there is the women's movement, whose rejection of the status of women [in the country] was endorsed by the women of the Political Bureau of the National Liberation Front Party of Algeria, the party which was in power at the time.

Return to Democracy

What some people call backing is explained by some women as support for the institutions which represent the regime, not for the regime itself. It is support for the regime as a symbol of Algeria's stability and existence. The women think that change is necessary and essential in political life, but they think that change will not come about by shaking what independent Algeria has managed to gain. This was made clear in a strong statement made by Algerian women on 16 November, the day of the presidential election. When they went to vote that day, women cast a strong vote for the restoration of security to Algeria. They did that by voting for al-Yamin Zirwal, a representative who is not beholden to the military establishment. And yet, the fact that Algerian men and women did go [to the polling stations] to vote remains an indication of the strong desire they have for a strong authority that is fair and, at the same time, able to unite families. Algerian men and women want a strong authority that can hold at bay those factors that turn married women into widows. Algerian men and women want a strong authority which can heal the broken hearts of mothers, remedy the wounded hopes of Algeria's young women, and restore to them a future.

Female Victims of Algerian Violence in 1995

Women Wounded (by age)

Occupation	1-14	15-29	30-44	45+	Age Unknown	Total
Journalists			1			1
Court Officers					2	2
Municipal employees	2					2
Female Veterans						0
Rehabilitation Center Workers						0
Teachers		1				1
Unemployed	3	15	9	10		41
Daily Workers						0
Laborers		3	3			6
Pupils	3	1				4

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Women Wounded (by age)						
Workers in Army establishments		1	1		1	3
National Security Workers			1			1
Students	2	3			2	7
Retired						0
Other Occupations		2	1	3		6
Trained Workers		1				1
Unknown Occupations	19	32	17	13	101	152
Families Associated With Security Officers				1	2	3
Physicians						0
Nurses						0
Health technicians				3		3
Total	27	60	36	28	112	263

WOMEN KILLED (by age)

OCCUPATION	1-14	15-29	30-44	45+	Age Unknown	Total
Journalists		3			1	4
Court Officers		1	1		-	2
Municipal Employees		2	1			3
Rehabilitation Center Workers			1			1
Teachers			2	2		4
Unemployed Workers	3	34	42	30	4	113
Daily Workers			1			1
Laborers		6	12	3		21
Pupils	2	1	1		1	5
Workers in Army Establishments		8	1	1		10
National Security Workers			1			1
Students		5				5
Retired				1		1

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OCCUPATION	1-14	15-29	30-44	45+	Age Unknown	Total
Other Occupations	1	6	5	6		18
Trained Workers		3				3
Unknown Occupations	10	32	19	24	53	138
Of Families Associated With Security Officers		6		2	1	9
Physicians						
Nurses			1			1
Health Technicians			1			1
Total	16	107	88	71	60	342

Algeria: FIS European Supporters Issue Newsletter

MS2204130596 Southall THE ENLIGHTENMENT in English 16 Apr 96

[Newsletter "publicizing the Islamic Struggle in Algeria," published by Islamic Salvation Front "supporters in Europe"; quotation marks as received — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text]

There will be no "Sharm al-Shaykh" summit in support of Lebanon!

Israel has savagely attacked a sovereign state, Lebanon. If one still consider the UN as a body elaborating international laws that should be implemented no mater the colour, religion, strength or weakness of the countries in question, then Israel should respect the sovereignty of the State of Lebanon and withdraw from its territories. These UN resolutions were passed well before Saddam Husayn invaded Kuwait and well before he was kicked out.

The reactions of the "countries that today do count" have varied from approving the aggression and "waving" a UN security council veto as the US elections approach, to that of " the sovereignty of Lebanon should be respected" passing by "yes for a measured reaction against Hizballah attacks". Sorry, nothing like "Sharm al-Shaykh" summit, where leaders and delegations from many parts of the Arab world came "crawling" as soon as they "heard the sad news". They were more royalists than the King and condemned "the Palestinian terrorism" and the "barbaric Islamists fundamentalist" who want to "shake them up" from power. They wanted to make the West "understand" that there is no difference between those who dare combat Israel and the Islamists prisoners in the torture centres of Tunis, Algiers, Cairo etc... They should be eradicate by all means. Killing and oppressing them should be decriminalised and encouraged.

Many Islamic movements within the Ummah [islamic nation], have reached a realistic understanding of the real causes of its ever increasing weakness and continuous humiliation. It is not Israel, nor the West or anybody else. The sickness is within the Ummah itself and the Ummah is in a desperate need of an internal healing that will probably not be achieved without pain. It is a mater of "to be or not to be!".

A war (or a non-peace) situation can be conceived as that which evolves on three ranked territories corresponding to three different time scales. The military domain deals with the short term, the economical with the medium term and the cultural with the long term. This later can be the ultimate goal; that of taking away the opponent "existence and traces". The talk here is about the war in the cultural domain which usually is a hegemony of one culture over another (or others). The talk is not about a real peace situation where cultures have the tendency to intermingle and "give birth" to new cultures which are made from what is the best in "their ancestors".

The Arab world should have learned long time ago from these past half century or so that they have been, they are and probably will always be the "ugliest" when it comes to a military confrontation of any sort with Israel as far as the "countries that do count" are concerned. For those countries strategists, nothing can replace the position of Israel in securing the "oil route" not mater how "aligned and docile" the Arab countries are turned

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into. Israel "strategic weight" may have decreased at the end of the cold war nevertheless it has retained her standby position in case the East changes its mind.

In the military domain the West has a common strategy of which Israel is a part. This and the powerful Jewish lobbies in many western countries explain why Israel "is never wrong" in whatever she does to the Arabs. Under this domain, there is the economical one, where nuances and differences can exist between western countries bearing in mind that no matter how wide these differences can be they are not allowed to alter the military arrangement. This explain in part why that even if an Arab country spend all its earnings in one market, say the US and gives its oil for free, it will never outclass Israel in sight of the US and no one is going to defend its right vis a vis Israel. It is at most good to console with some "windy" declarations.

Is Israel really wanting peace as some pretend or is it just a post-cold war necessity of transposing the war from the military domain to an economical (and later cultural) "crusade" with a "penetration" reaching today territories as deep far as Mauritania and Senegal. The use by Israel of water as a weapon is part of this economical war, imposing to the Palestinians how they should teach their children the "Palestinian History" is part of the cultural one.

Today aggression against Lebanon did not target the Hizballah positions as much as Lebanon's economical infrastructure. The objective seems to be pushing few years back, the recovery of that very potential country. Just as the "annihilation" of the Iraqi infrastructure without wanting to remove Saddam from power, is understood to have been. Does the "re-De-Gaullisation" of the French policy toward the Arab world and the prominent economical position Lebanon is supposed to have in that scheme (Francophony oblige...back to the cultural thing), has anything to do with Israel aggression which came few days after President Chirac visit to Lebanon? If the timing of the attack is synchronised with the coming elections in Israel, the plan with the specific targets and the objectives to achieve is not an improvisation resulting from an instinctive reaction to Hizballah Katyusha rockets firing!

The first step in recovering this Ummah dignity and respect in the international arena is to have, just like Israel, governments freely chosen and freely removable by the people. In that day, the Arab governments position will be faithful to that of their people aspiration and the interest of the Ummah will be preserved.

"This is not just a military operation. It is an attempt to smash a country!"

The British newspaper "The Independent" has on the 15/04/96, published a report from its journalist Robert Fisk who has witnessed the Israeli attack that should leave "a land without people" as he puts it: al-Mansuri, southern Lebanon: It was heartbreaking. As the shells swished over the village, the last of its people came walking in tears through the long grass, out of basements, down the stone tracks from their poor cement houses towards the United Nations soldiers.

One young woman carried her two-month-old baby and clutched it to her breast in our car, her tears splashing on to the child's shawl. The oldest woman in the village sat next to her, well over 80, her lips and cheeks tattooed in the way girls adorned their faces in the days of the Ottoman empire.One man had wrapped his ears in bandages to deaden the crack of the Israeli artillery on the hill above.

North of us, across the orange orchards and villages of southern Lebanon on this beautiful spring afternoon, sprouted mushrooms clouds of white and grey smoke as the Israeli jets worked over the little hamlets with their cheaply-build minarets and pot-holed roads.

All of Tyre was to be evacuated by dusk, the Israelis had ordered. This was to be a land without people. As the shells whizzed over us, a French UN colonel led an elderly woman in a bright blue "abaya" gown to our jeep. Once inside, she placed her front-door key on the fringe of her scarf, knotted it safely inside the material, and tucked it into her dress. Then she put her head in her hands.

All day, driving the hot, frightening roads of southern Lebanon, we had heard the news from Beirut, the Israelis had blown up the electricity switching station at al-Hazmiyah cutting electricity from much of the capital. Their jets had raided the southern suburbs of the city for the third time, attacking what the Israelis claimed — and the word "claimed" needs to be repeated these days — were Hizbollah offices. But the Israeli jets sweeping across Lebanon yesterday were on more than a military operation.

For what is happening today is a concerted attempt by Israel to smash this country, to enfeeble its government, to overwhelm its resources with up to half a million refugees, to cut its electricity supply system at the very moment when the nation is recovering from a horrific war in which Israel itself had been involved. Israeli-controlled radios in southern Lebanon were yesterday demanding further evacuations from villages north of

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Tyre and threatening to bomb road bridges. They have already closed Beirut port.

So Lebanon — and the pattern of attacks and threats against the civilian population all point in this direction — is to be impoverished and, if the port blockade continues, to be starved. And why? To persuade, as the Israelis claim, a vulnerable Lebanese government to disarm Hizballah and thus make more comfortable Israel's occupation of southern Lebanon? Or to make peace with Israel, a separate peace which would isolate Syria, a peace made by a country that would be as weak as the PLO and Jordan were when they were brought to the table to talk to the Israelis?

And in the real world of Lebanon the simple question has to be asked: Would the Israelis have embarked on such a massive military operation at such enormous cost (albeit at the expenses of the American taxpayer), just to avenge the wounding of five Israelis by Katyusha rockets, an assault that was itself retaliation for the killing of a Lebanese youth?

For weeks now, there have been hints from Israeli ministers that Lebanon should make a separate peace with Israel, that it should ignore Syria, that Syria should be isolated for its supposed intransigence in peace negotiations over the Golan Heights. For this war is a message to the Syrian leader, President al-Asad, a demonstration in its very backyard of what happens to those who do not want to make peace with Israel.

In any event, the Hizballah are not beaten. Driving out to Mansuri through the shellfire yesterday, a clutch of Katysha rockets swished upwards to our right from behind a stand of pine trees, the missiles aimed at the Israeli town of al-Nahariyah.

Within minutes, two Apache helicopters appeared in the sky above us like angry bees.

A pilotless drone reconnaissance aircraft buzzed ominously over us as we pulled up at the village to extract the last of its inhabitants. "We don't like to help the Israelis vacate the villages," Swedish UN Captain Mikael Lindval said as an unshaven man poured animal feed in a bucket in front of his tethered mule and patted the beast goodbye. "But when the people want to leave because of the bombing, we try to help them."

In another country, with another UN convoy, I had watched the same scene only three years ago. Then, the UN officers said they felt as if they were helping the Serbs to "ethnically cleanse" the land by taking away the villagers.

Yesterday, in a village which boasts one mansion with a lawn as meticulous as a golfing green but with most of its homes mere concrete shacks, its lanes bordered by red roses and yellow flower and trees of bitter-tasting peaches, we loaded the last of Mansuri's people aboard the UN lorries and took them from the village in which almost all of them had been born. And we were, of course, doing exactly, as the Israelis would have wished.

Egypt

Egypt: Parliamentarian Calls For Expulsion of Israeli, U.S. Envoys

NC2304145896 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 19 Apr 96 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] People's Assembly member Ahmad Taha (an independent) has submitted a request to Prime Minister Dr. Kamal al-Janzuri to expel the Israeli and U.S. ambassadors in Cairo and to allow young Egyptian volunteers to join the Lebanese resistance. Taha affirmed that the public wants the two ambassadors expelled. He demanded that the government clarify its stand on this subject.

Egypt: Parliamentary Delegation's Visit to Israel Canceled

NC2304162796 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1405 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 23 Apr (MENA)—People's Assembly Speaker Dr. Ahmad Surur announced at today's session that a parliamentary delegation will not travel to Israel.

Amid applause by the deputies, which lasted several minutes, Dr. Surur stressed that parliamentary delegations reflect the peoples' and nations' voices and the Egyptian people are angry and hence the representatives of the people cannot travel to Israel to talk with people who have chosen the language of war.

He added: The day the language of peace begins, I will allow the parliamentary delegation to go, so that the visit will be made in a climate of peace and not a climate of war.

The speaker went on to say: The travel of an Egyptian parliamentary delegation to Israel is a decision taken by the executive committee of the Egyptian parliamentary body and the date is left to the speaker to set. I noted that the delegation's visit was to be made within the framework of the language of constructive dialogue to achieve just and comprehensive peace. But since Israel has chosen the language of war, started to beat the drums of war, and began to attack unarmed civilians in south Lebanon, no parliamentary delegation will travel to Israel.

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This came at the conclusion of a debate of urgent statements presented by a number of deputies from various parties on the Israeli aggression against south Lebanon, in which they criticized the Israeli aggression against Lebanon, describing it as barbaric and insolent. They also attacked U.S. policy, which is biased in favor of Israeli aggression.

At the conclusion of the debate, the government stressed through Kamal al-Shadhili, minister of state for People's Assembly and Consultative Council affairs, that the barbaric Israeli military operations against civilians in south Lebanon have exceeded all limits and restored to the region the climate of war again. It noted that the attacks on facilities and the bombardment of unarmed civilians are inconsistent with the atmosphere of peace and the desire for a peaceful settlement. Al-Shadhili urged Israel to halt these attacks immediately, which, he stressed, will not bring security for Israel. He noted that the use of force as a means for resolving conflicts will only complicate matters, could cause a counter explosion, increase tension, and cast doubts about Israel's seriousness in the peace process and about the results of the peacemakers summit in Sharm al-Shaykh.

Al-Shadhili went on to say that Egypt has very courageously condemned Israel's behavior and demanded in the Security Council, the United Nations, and the Arab League that these practices be banned in the future and called on Israel to return to negotiations and not to use military means.

Commenting on Nasirite deputy Samih 'Ashur's remarks that we cannot fight now because of our circumstances, minister al-Shadhili said: We do not want to fight because we have proceeded along the peace road after the victorious October battle, when President Mubarak led the air aces in the first sortie. He added: We have a strong army capable of facing enemies in war. It is also a force of reconstruction in times of peace.

The debate began with a speech from deputy Ahmad Abu-Zayd, representative of the parliamentary body of the National Democratic Party, the majority, who said that Israel's actions are only directed toward the Israeli elections and it is regrettable that civilians are being killed and infrastructure being destroyed for the sake of the Israeli voters. He stressed that Israel's actions will delay the process of normalization, adding that this is not a government process but a willingness by peoples to deal with each other within a subjective framework and peaceful feelings. He said that these actions might delay or cancel the economic summit due to be held in Cairo in October. He noted that it is wrong to demand a halt to the peace process because this is a "Zionist" demand. He called on the international community to implement Resolution 425 immediately and compensate Lebanon for its victims and facilities. He added that it is better for Israel to withdraw.

Yasin Siraj-al-Din, representative of the Wafd parliamentary group, described the Israeli aggression as barbaric and reckless and as insolence on the part of Israel and all those who support it or cannot oppose it. He called for differentiating between the fedayeen, who sacrifice their lives for their homeland's dignity, and the occupiers. He also called for an immediate stop to normalization with Israel and to any economic dealings with Israel.

Khalid Muhiy-al-Din, leader of the National Progressive Unionist Grouping parliamentary group, called for withdrawing the Egyptian ambassador from Israel and stopping normalization with it immediately. He also called for declaring Egypt's refusal to hold the International Economic Conference in October until Israel withdraws from south Lebanon. He also called on Jordan to withdraw its ambassador from Israel and on Qatar and Oman to immediately stop normalization with Israel.

Liberal Party representative Hilal Hamidah called for the immediate expulsion of the Israeli ambassador in Egypt, the holding of an urgent Arab summit, and violation of the unjust international siege on Libya and Iraq, because these resolutions confirm the double standards. Hamidah also called for starting a public campaign to collect financial and material contributions for the Lebanese people and urged that this should start at the People's Assembly. He declared that he is willing to donate 5,000 pounds as soon as the contributions start. He also stressed the need to cancel the Egyptian parliamentary delegation's visit to Israel for good and warned that Israel is preparing for a major war.

Nasirite Party deputy Samih 'Ashur called for freezing relations with Israel. He said: We do not need to establish full diplomatic relations with it and we should declare that we refuse to receive any Israeli delegations in Egypt.

Egypt: Al-Azhar's Tantawi Calls Hizballah Bombers 'Martyrs'

NC2304170596 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 19 Apr 96 p 9

[Interview with al-Azhar Shaykh Dr. Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi by Sana al-Sa'id; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [al-Sa'id] What is your view of the situation in the Arab and Islamic world? Israel has attacked an Arab country, killed innocent civilians,

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displaced many others, destroyed houses, and thrown an entire country into turmoil.

[Tantawi] It is my opinion, and the opinion of every Muslim, that what is happening is a tragedy and a flagrant Israeli aggression against Lebanon. I have heard that Hizballah men have prepared themselves for operations to defend their honor, religion, homeland, and dignity. I personally do not call them suicide operations because the word "suicide" is not acceptable in Islamic jurisprudence. I call them operations in defense of religion, honor, homeland, and everything that God Almighty has ordered us to defend. If they [Hizballah members] blow themselves up, are martyred, and kill dozens of enemies, then in this case they are martyrs, because they blow themselves up amongst the aggressors.

[Al-Sa'id] Recently you stated that those who blow themselves up are not martyrs.

[Tantawi] I would like to say that what I stated was in the context of one who blows himself up in general. But he who blows himself up among enemies and belligerents is a martyr. Regarding one who blows himself up in a car in which there is a Muslim, a woman, a child, and a civilian, I cannot equate him with the first category. He who blows himself up among God's enemies—who have occupied our land and killed our children—and kills scores of enemies in defence of his honor and religion, I have no doubt that he is a martyr.

In the meantime, I urge Arab and Islamic countries to rally around, cooperate with, and support Lebanon, because what is happening runs counter to justice, human dignity, and religious teachings that order us not to attack others and to repel the aggressor and make him stop his oppression and aggression.

[Al-Sa'id] The UN Security Council has not adopted a resolution denouncing Israel for its aggression against Lebanon, thanks to U.S. support for all of Israel's aggressive actions in the region. What is your comment?

[Tantawi] It is my view, and the view of every Muslim, that the Security Council must adopt a positive stance by supporting the victim and denouncing the oppressor. Our brothers in Lebanon are suffering from clear injustice, which no reasonable person can deny. The Security Council must adopt a just and firm stance, and take all measures to deter Israel and establish justice.

[Al-Sa'id] What about the United States, which supports aggressive Israel?

[Tantawi] I do not mention any country by name, be it the United States or any other country. I say that whoever supports an oppressor against a victim contravenes divine laws, temporal laws, and human logic. [passage omitted]

Egypt: Citizen Arrested for Spying for Israel

NC2304181496 Cairo ROSE AL-YUSUF in Arabic 22 Apr 96 pp 30-31

[Report by Wa'il al-Abrashi]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Supreme State Security prosecutor has charged Egyptian national 'Abd-al-Malik 'Abd-al-Mun'im 'Ali Hamid (48 years old) with spying for Israel. Hamid hails from from the village of Nawasa al-Ghayt in the Aja District of the al-Daqahliyah Governorate. A large number of the village's inhabitants work in Israel.

The public prosecutor has completed his investigation of the case. The Israeli spy confessed to the charge of espionage. His remand order has been renewed for 45 days.

We exclusively publish this report, the details of which are as follows: The security services arrested the spy in the first week of April, before he could leave for Israel, which he had been visiting in the past two years through the Taba border terminal. Hamid had been under surveillance for several months. With the permission of the prosecutor, his telephone was tapped and his movements in Egypt and Israel were watched. Coded messages were seized with him.

The spy confessed before the prosecutor that he had met in Israel with Israeli Mosad officers who recruited him to spy on Egypt, especially after they knew from his papers that he was a petty officer in the Egyptian navy before he left the service and retired in 1978.

The spy confessed that Mosad officers asked him to provide them with military secrets on the Egyptian army and military installations and bases, especially about the Shawa military base in al-Mansurah several kilometers from his home village of Nawasa al-Ghayt.

The spy said that Mosad officers trained him on spy techniques, especially the use of codes. He confessed that he provided them with some information and military secrets. He added: They exploited my need for money after they found that I was searching for work in Israel. They tempted me with money and I acceded to their demands. [passage omitted]

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Egypt: Turkish Envoy Meets Musa, Comments on Agreement With Israel

NC2304140496 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1315 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 23 Apr (MENA) — Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa met today with Onur Oymen, Turkish Foreign Ministry under secretary, who is currently visiting Cairo.

The Turkish official said after the meeting that they discussed the means of boosting bilateral relations and that the talks were held in a very cordial atmosphere and were useful.

He added: We feel fully satisfied with these talks. He said that the two sides agreed on the importance of joint cooperation for the sake of the region's security and peace and on the need to combat terrorism and ensure the success of the peace process.

Regarding the situation in Lebanon, he said that the two sides agreed on the importance of an immediate halt to the Israeli aggression against civilians.

On the Turkish-Israeli cooperation agreement, Oymen said that he told the Egyptian side that there were false media reports on the cooperation agreement concluded by the Turkish and Israeli sides and that this agreement does not involve a strategic alliance between the two countries or with any other country. He added that Turkey was only normalizing its relations with Israel as many countries in the region have done.

He noted that an agreement on military training was signed within the framework of these normal ties and that there are similar agreements that Turkey has signed with 16 other countries, including Egypt and other Arab countries.

Oymen stressed that this agreement is not directed against the interests of any Arab or neighboring country.

Regarding the reports that Turkey will benefit from this agreement by seeking help from Israel to undertake air sorties over the Kurdish opposition in northern Iraq, the Turkish official stressed that this claim is completely unfounded. He said: We do not need to cooperate with Israel to fight terrorism in the region, whether in Iraqi or any other territories. He stressed that this is not the objective of the cooperation with Israel.

On the visit that Musa intends to make to Turkey, Oyman said: We are expecting Mr. Musa to make this visit very soon. He added that Turkey regards Egypt as one of the pillars of stability and peace in the Middle East.

He said that discussions during the meeting also dealt with the means of strengthening cooperation in fighting the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and that the two sides agree on this issue.

On the meeting of the foreign ministers to follow up on the Sharm al-Shaykh summit in which Turkey is taking part and which has been postponed due to the Lebanese crisis and Turkey's view of this summit whose results have been damaged by the Israeli aggression against Lebanon, the Turkish official said: We hope that the aggression against Lebanon will stop so that we can continue with the Sharm al-Shaykh process. It is in the interest of all countries of the region to continue with it until it successfully ends in establishing peace in the Middle East.

[Cairo MENA in Arabic at 1325 GMT on 23 April carries another report on the meeting that says: "Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said that he will visit Turkey next week. He added that he heard the Turkish side's explanation of the Turkish-Israeli agreement and what the Turkish official has stated on this issue is enough. Musa noted that the issue will be discussed during his visit to Turkey next week. He added that he will hold talks during this visit with a number of Turkish officials on bilateral ties and the means of boosting them, especially in the economic field."]

Egypt: Al-Baz Meets Turkish Envoy, Notes Turkish Explanations

NC2304143196 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1340 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 23 Apr (MENA) — Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first Foreign Ministry under secretary and director of the president's office for political affairs, met today with Onur Oymen, Turkish Foreign Ministry under secretary.

Dr. al-Baz said after the meeting that Egypt asked the Turkish side to provide it with information about the military agreement reached with Israel. He added that the Turkish official stressed that the agreement does not include an alliance or coordination of military plans and is not targeted against anyone but is limited to two fields only, namely cooperation in the field of the military training of some forces and cooperation in the field of developing some military industries.

He stressed that the Turkish official told Egypt that his country has committed itself to not entering into any understanding or agreement with any other country against any Arab country, whether it be Iraq or Syria. Al-Baz also stressed that Turkey told Egypt that this cooperation with Israel will not involve Middle East

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issues or rights for military operations in the Middle East from Turkey.

Egypt: Suspect in Mubarak's Assassination Attempt Interviewed

NC2304201896 London MBC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 23 Apr 96

[Passages within quotation marks are recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] MBC has obtained the full recording of an interview with Mustafa Hamzah, the prime suspect in the attempt to assassinate Egyptian President Husni Mubarak in Addis Ababa last year. It appears from the tape that Hamzah is in Afghanistan. In the interview, Hamzah claimed that Sudan had nothing to do with the attempt.

The story of Mustafa Hamzah started with his imprisonment in connection with the assassination of President Anwar al-Sadat, when he was detained for his links with the al-Jihad Group. A new chapter in the episode began when the Ethiopian authorities accused him of participating in the attempt to assassinate Egyptian President Husni Mubarak on 26 June 1995. In the interview, which was conducted by Ahmad Zaydan in Konar, Afghanistan, the prime suspect denied any direct links with the operation.

[Hamzah] "Actually, this is an honor which I cannot claim. I had no role in this operation, other than very minor consultation."

Hamzah also stressed that those who carried out the operation had not come from Sudan, but from somewhere else and with various passports.

[Hamzah] "They came from Pakistan, and this is documented. They all came from Pakistan carrying passports other than Egyptian."

[Zaydan] "What nationality?"

[Hamzah] "It is documented and known that they were [carrying] the identification of Yemeni nationals."

While the Security Council is considering sanctions against Sudan, and in an obvious attempt to deny the Sudanese Government's relationship with the attempt on Mubarak, Mustafa Hamzah reiterated that he is a member of the Islamic Group and that the group carried out the operation alone without any help, adding that the group is even at odds with the regime in Sudan.

[Hamzah] "The Islamic Group carried out this operation on its own and it has no relationship with any other party, be it Sudan or others. This is an accusation being made against the group. When the group assassinated al-Sadat...."

But the prime suspect in the attempt on President Mubarak's life left out one main thing. He emphasized that he has been in Afghanistan for eight months. However, he did not confirm his absence from Addis Ababa at the time of the operation.

Egypt: Afghan Envoy—No Request Received for Hamzah Extradition

MM2304114796 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 23 Apr 96 p 6

[Report by Muhammad 'Allam: "Egypt: Hamzah Not Entitled To Clear Sudan of Accusations"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo — Ambassador 'Adil al-Safti, first under secretary at the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, said yesterday that the interview given by Mustafa Hamzah, prime suspect in the case of the attempt on the life of Egyptian President Husni Mubarak in Addis Ababa last summer, "contains deception." He said that Hamzah's revelation of his whereabouts "is an attempt to clear Sudan of the accusations leveled at it."

Al-Safti said: "He is not entitled to clear Khartoum of the accusations leveled at it."

Meanwhile, Afghan Ambassador to Cairo Fazlollah Fazel has expressed his country's willingness to hand over Hamzah to the Egyptian authorities for trial if he is arrested. However, he told AL-HAYAH that the presence of Mustafa Hamzah (Abu-Hazim) in Konar means that he is beyond the Afghan Government's control. The ambassador, who denied Hamzah's presence in Kabul last week, stressed that "the government of President Borhanoddin Rabbani is suffering badly as result of the presence of those extremists, who fought alongside the forces of (Prime Minister) Golboddin Hekmatyar and are currently fighting under the Taleban Movement's banner."

Asked whether Afghanistan has received a request from Egypt to work to extradite Abu-Hazim, he said: "As of today (yesterday) no request has been received through the embassy."

Egypt: Foreign Minister Musa Leaves for Athens

NC2304164796 Cairo MENA in English 1530 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, April 23—(MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa left here this evening for Athens on a one-day visit to Greece during which he will be received by Greek President Konstandinos Stefanopoulos.

Musa will further hold talks with the Greek foreign minister on various issues of mutual interest.

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Musa will also express Egypt's condolences over the victims of the terrorist attack against a Greek tourist group here on Thursday [18 April].

Libya

Libya: Al-Qadhdhafi Denies U.S. Claims on Tarhunah Project

NC2304135396 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 19 Apr 96 p 8

[Report by Mahmud Bakri and Rabi' Shahin from Tripoli]

[FBIS Translated Text] Libyan Revolution Leader Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi has stated that the current attempts to impose a blockade on Sudan are part of a series of measures to strangle and exterminate the Arab nation. Answering a question by AL-SHA'B on Libya's stance on the attempts to impose a blockade on Sudan at a time when Iraq and Libya are suffering from an unjust blockade, al-Qadhdhafi said: This blockade is targeting Egypt because the blockade on Libya from the West, the blockade on Sudan from the South, and the presence of the Israeli enemy in the East are considered a blockade on Egypt, given its geogrpahical proximity to Sudan and Libya.

Al-Qadhdhafi added: When the situation in Lebanon is as it is now, when Jordan is receiving NATO forces, and when Turkey is hosting forces, this means that the aim is to strangle Syria. What Israel wants now is to strangle Egypt.

Thanking Egypt for its stance toward U.S. threats against Libya, al-Qadhdhafi said: Egypt must resume its leading role in confronting imperialism and Zionism.

At the news conference he held with Arab and foreign correspondents on Wednesday [17 April], al-Qadhdhafi said: The United States cannot risk intercepting the flights of Libyan pilgrims to Jeddah and thus defy the Muslims in matters that concern their religion. Commenting on the violation by a Libyan airliner carrying Libyan pilgrims of the air embargo imposed on Libya, he said: The United States will be losing its mind if tries to stop the pilgrimage. He described the pligrims' flights on board Libyan planes as an ordinary matter [mas'alah 'adiyah] that takes place every year.

On U.S. claims that Libya is building a chemical weapons plant in Tarhunah, al-Qadhdhafi said: There is a tunnel in the mountain for the passage of the pipeplines of the man-made Great River. A Korean company has signed a contract to carry out this project. He described U.S. claims in this regard as a "big lie."

Al-Qadhdhafi asked: Does the United States dare to attack the Israeli Dimona reactor or Israel's chemical and biological weapons plants? He described the U.S. accusations against Libya as unjust and racist.

Asked whether Libya accepts inspection of the alleged chemical weapons plant in Tarhunah, al-Qadhdhafi said: We accept inspection on our own terms. The Americans' lies will be exposed and then they must pay the price. He added: We are prepared at any time to refute the lies.

On the Arab-Israeli peace, al-Qadhdhafi said: The Israelis do not want peace because they thrive on war. If all the Arabs recognize them and kiss their hands and feet, the Israelis will not be satisfied.

Al-Qadhdhafi accused the 29 states that participated in the Sharm al-Shaykh summit of complicity in the murder of Lebanese children and in the destruction of Lebanon. He said the Israeli aggression against Lebanon is the first result of the Sharm al-Shaykh conference.

On the amount of time the embargo against Libya will last, al-Qadhdhafi said: It will last as long as the United States exists and controls the UN Security Council.

Morocco

Morocco: Velayati—Muslims Must Find Way To End Israeli 'Aggression'

LD2304142396 Rabat Moroccan Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] We go back to the Iranian foreign minister's visit, and we point out that he made a statement yesterday before he left Rabat. Mr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati said that he delivered a written message to his majesty from 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, president of the Islamic Republic of Iran. He said that the talks held with his majesty revolved around bilateral relations and ways of developing them.

He said that they also talked about the recent developments in southern Lebanon after the Israeli aggression and the diplomatic efforts deployed in order to resolve the situation. He said that Muslim states must find a way to end the Israeli aggression on Lebanon.

Sudan

Sudan: Southern Rebel Leader Garang Reportedly Killed by Aide

LD2404080396 Paris Radio France International in French 0730 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The government press in Sudan writes that John Garang, the southern rebel leader, was reportedly killed in a shootout with one of his aides

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who would not launch an attack against another southern rebel movement.

Government newspapers in Khartoum do not give the place or the date of the event. Right now it is impossible to confirm or deny this piece of news.

Sudan: Government Paper Reports Rebel Leader Garang's Death

LD2404082696 Paris Radio France International in French 0800 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Sudanese Government press reports this morning that Colonel John Garang, leader of the southern Sudanese rebels, has been killed by one of his aides.

According to the official daily AL-SUDAN Al-HADITH, the incident occurred after the aide refused to obey Garang's orders. He had told him to launch an attack against the forces of another rival southern faction led by Riak Machar.

The press gives neither the place nor the date of the incident.

Sudan: SPLA Spokesman Denies Reports of Garang's Death

AB2404101396 Paris AFP in English 1003 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nairobi, April 24 (AFP) — The rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) on Wednesday [24 April] denied Khartoum government press reports that its leader John Garang had been killed by one of his aides.

"This is wishful thinking by the Khartoum Islamic fundamentalist regime. They would like to assassinate Garang but because they are unable to do it they have started dreaming about his death," SPLA spokesman in Nairobi Pagan Amum told AFP.

Khartoum newspapers, including the official daily AL-SUDAN AL-HADITH, stated that Colonel Garang was shot dead in an exchange of fire with his aide. They said the killing occurred after Garang's subordinate refused to obey an order to attack forces of a breakaway southern Sudanese faction led by Riek Machar.

The reports did not say when or where the alleged incident took place, but alleged that Garang shot at his aide, Garhot Mai Nogot, and was killed when the subordinate returned fire. The body was taken to a region under rebel control in south Sudan aboard a UN aircraft, the newspapers claimed.

Pagan said the Sudanese government press haa been reporting Garang's death "almost daily for the past six months".

"How many souls does Garang have to keep on dying over and over again?" Pagan asked. The SPLA has been fighting for more than 12 years to free mainly animist and Christian south Sudan from domination by the Arabised, Muslim north.

Sudan: SPLA Denies John Garang's Death

LD2404101596 Paris Radio France International in French 1000 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In Sudan, the Sudanese Peoples' Liberation Army, the SPLA, has denied reports published by the Sudanese Government press that Colonel Garang, leader of the southern rebels, habeen s killed by one of his aides.

Sudan: Khartoum University Reportedly Scene of Riots; 3 Hurt

NC2304143496 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1345 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Khartoum, 23 Apr (MENA)— Riots and demonstrations broke out at Khartoum University today after it was announced that Islamist students had won the Students Union elections held two days ago. The riots were particularly intense at the university's science and commerce departments.

The police confronted the students and brought things under control. Three students were hurt, two seriously, and were taken to the police hospital for treatment.

The police took strict security measures around the universities in Khartoum and erected fortifications at the entrances and exits of the al-Nilayn University, formerly Cairo University's Khartoum branch.

Khartoum University was the scene of similar violence on 2 and 3 April, when students confronted attempts by Islamists to transfer ballot boxes to the Students Union office to hold the count there in violation of prevailing practice. The elections were canceled as a result and demonstrations were staged in Khartoum's main streets. Several students were hurt.

Sudan: Government Urges UNSC To Review Issue of Mubarak Suspects

EA2304200796 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Following what was reported in the London-based AL-HAYAT the day before yesterday regarding comments made by the first suspect in the

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attempt to assassinate the Egyptian president in Addis Ababa last June, in which his hideout was disclosed and in which he denied that Sudan had any links with the unfortunate incident, the Foreign Ministry wishes to point out to those dealing with the issue that the new leads given in the comments of the first suspect suffice to assist all those seeking the truth, which is the desire of all who (?believe) in justice.

The Foreign Ministry wishes to point out that the information given by the first suspect is beneficial and can give the investigation a chance to corroborate the fundamental [word indistinct] on which UN Resolution 1044 is based. Because of the information given by the first suspect and in reminding the UN Security Council [UNSC] of its obligation to search for the truth, the Foreign Ministry of Sudan requests the Council to review the issue in accordance with the request made by Sudan's permanent representative to the UN.

Sudan: Foreign Ministry Statement on Lebanon Lauds French Efforts

EA2304194396 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Foreign Ministry has issued the following statement:

Sudan has been monitoring with great concern the brutal Israeli aggression on fraternal Lebanon occasioning the deaths of hundreds of innocent and peaceful children, women, and elderly men. This clearly illustrates Israel's hostile method of consolidating its occupation of Arab land, violating human values and the sovereignty of states and taking lightly all international conventions.

Sudan regrets the silence of the international community in the face of these Israeli atrocities and the attempts by some major states to shield and protect Israel rather than condemning it. These same states are also seeking to brand others with baseless accusations, thereby establishing double standards.

The Government of Sudan wishes to express its appreciation for the efforts of the French Republic in seeking to end the bloodshed and the Israeli aggression.

Sudan: PAIC Forms Committee To Send Relief to Lebanon

EA2304195396 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Popular Arab and Islamic Conference [PAIC] has condemned the Israeli aggression on Lebanon and described it as part of the process of humiliation pursued by the Zionist enitity to destroy the Lebanese people's aspirations to political stability and a dignified life. [passage omitted]

The PAIC has meanwhile formed a popular committee to assist the fraternal people of Lebanon. It has decided to send urgent relief assistance to Lebanon. The PAIC has urged all traders, companies and corporations to donate food supplies to be sent to the Lebanese people. [passage omitted]

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Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia: Interior Minister Announces Arrest of Riyadh Bomb Suspects

LD2204103496 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0926 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Riyadh, 22 Apr — Interior Minister His Royal Highness Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-Aziz announced today that with God's help, those responsible for the bombing in Riyadh, in the al-'Aliyah area on Monday 20/6/1416 AH, corresponding to November 27 1995, have been arrested.

This came in a statement by His Highness Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-Aziz to the television of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia at 1100 this morning. It was followed by the broadcast of the voices and pictures of the people arrested claiming responsibility [for the bombing].

The statement of the interior minister will follow.

[Prince Nayif] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate, praise be to Almighty God, and prayers and peace be upon the most honorable of messengers. Dear citizens, I am happy to announce that with the grace of God, people responsible for the bombing in Riyadh, in the 'Alya' area, on Monday 20 Jumada al-Thani 1416 AH, corresponding to 13 November 1995, have been arrested.

These arrests were the result of the intensive security measures based on the experience and competence of the general investigation team without any inside or outside assistance, except for the help of Almighty and Merciful God. They are also the results of efforts made by your brothers and sons, members of the general investigation team, who achieved this honorable result.

On behalf of my lord, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, may God preserve him, His Highness Crown Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, may God preserve him, His Highness Second Deputy Prime Minister Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, may God preserve him, and on behalf of the sons of this beloved country, I thank the members of the general investigation team, led by his excellency the general investigation chairman, General Salih Bin-Taha al-Khusayfan, for what they achieved and which is the subject of our appreciation.

Dear brothers, we thank God for what has been achieved, and it is a duty for all of us, without any exception, to assume our responsibilities vis-a-vis our true religion, our dear homeland and its protection from these alien trends which have affected some, just a few.

Hence it was incumbent upon us that our stances should be firm, aware and far removed from sentiment against those who target our faith, our security and our potentials. [passage omitted]

On this occasion, I must thank all citizens and official bodies for the concern which they showed about this incident, and I would also like to stress to everyone that up till now we have no indication that there was any connection between this case and that of the smuggled explosives which were seized at the al-Hadithah post last month as previously announced.

Since we have concluded our inquiry with the perpetrators of the explosion and their confessions have been legally recorded, they will be tried according to God's law. It is painful to us all that they are sons of our dear homeland which is known for the fact that its society is distinguished by its adherence to its religion, its loyalty to its king, its cohesiveness, and its solicitude for its homeland. Peace be upon you, and the mercy and blessings of God.

The perpetrators of the bombing incident in Riyadh then made their confessions. They are: 'Abd-al-'Aziz Fahd Nasir al-Mu'thim, Riyadh Sulayman Ishaq al-Hajiri, Muslih 'Ali 'Aydh al-Shamrani, and Khalid Ahmad Ibrahim al-Sa'id. Here is what they said: I am 'Abd-al-'Aziz Fahd Nasir al-Mi'thim, Saudi citizen, born in al-Kharj in 1392 AH, 24 years old. I have a secondary education diploma; I live in al-Shifa' district in Riyadh and I am self-employed. My religious inclination first began under the influence of a relative of mine and also some youths I had come to know. Afterward I shaved my beard and wore shorter robes.

In Riyadh I met the youths I have already named during the investigations. They had taken part in the Afghan jihad. In Afghanistan they had met people of various nationalities, and were influenced by their views that declared the rulers of this country, as well as the rulers of the Arab countries and the senior religious scholars' body of this country as unbelievers. Together with these youths we used to receive leaflets from al-Mas'ari and 'Usamah Bin-Ladin, and also leaflets from Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi. We also received leaflets from some Islamic groups in Egypt and Algeria. We also read and exchanged books that declared the rulers of the Arab countries and the rulers of this country as unbelievers, such as the book called "Clear Evidence on the Infidel Nature of the Saudi State" [al-kawakib al-jaliyah fi kufr al-dawlah al-sa'udiyah], and the book called "The Creed of Ibrahim" [Millat Ibrahim], written by Abu-Muhammad 'Isam al-Maqdisi.

When I read this book, "the Creed of Ibrahim' I was eager to pay a visit to Abu-Muhammad 'Isam al-Maqdisi and indeed, I visited him on many occasions in Jordan and was affected by his ideas, publications

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and books that declare that leaders of Arab states and the government and the body of senior ulema of this country [Saudi Arabia] are unbelievers.

Declaring this country an unbeliever is based on the fact that it does not rule according to the shari'ah of God in all fields and seeks justice from the despots in the United Nations, the International Court of Justice, and its supporters in the non-Islamic countries. We also declared as unbelievers the body of senior ulema, including Bin-Baz and Bin-'Athimin al-Anham, as hypocrites to the rulers of this country and supporters of this state.

The idea of starting a jihad operation against this state came to the four of us in about the year 1415 AH, corresponding with 1995. There was myself, 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Mu'thim, Muslih 'Ali al-Shamrani, Khalid Ahmad al-Sa'id and Riyadh Sulayman al-Hajiri.

We thought of carrying out some operations such as kidnapping and assassinations. But, fearing to be caught and exposed, we diverted our attention from these ideas and concentrated on explosions in government buildings and institutions. We also thought of bombing American places, houses, and compounds.

We went looking for places in Riyadh, where Americans were to be found but we changed our minds and found the headquarters of the U.S. mission to train the National Guard in Street 30, in 'Alya', in Riyadh. We noticed that the site was the best and the most appropriate for us to bomb because of the easy entry into and exit out of in the building. We decided on the timing of the explosives and split into two groups.

The members of the [first] group were Riyadh Sulayman al-Hajiri and Khalid al-Sa'id, whose mission was to provide and secure the car which was to be loaded with explosives [and placed] in front of the head quarters of the U.S. mission on 30th Avenue.

The members of the second group were myself, 'Abd-al-Aziz al-Mu'thim, and Muslih al-Shamrani. The mission was to provide explosives from Yemen. On this basis, I went with Muslih al-Shamrani to the town of Najran approximately two months before the date of the explosion in my car High Lux "Alonit" [as received].

When we arrived in Najran we saw a Yemeni man whom Muslih al-Shamrani knew from before and told him that we needed some contraband explosives and arms from Yemen. The Yemeni man did in fact help us and we entered Yemen via the contraband and smuggling route to arrive at the arms market. We bought explosives made of TNT and I bought, for my own use, four Kalashnikov machine-guns, a box for them and five Russian hand-guns with 70 rounds of ammunition for each hand-gun. We took the arms and the explosives and came back from Yemen to the [Saudi] Kingdom. We were able to bring them to the Kingdom via the contraband and smuggling route.

After that we put them in my car boot, High Lux, then we went to Riyadh, and we put the explosives in Muslih al-Shamrani's home, located in Dhahrat Laban, West Riyadh. As for the arms, I sold them to people whose names I have given in the minutes of the investigation.

After this, a succession of secret meetings between the four of us took place. No one knew about them except us four: Myself, 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Mi'thim; Muslih 'Ali al-Shamrani; Riyadh Sulayman al-Hajiri; and Khalid Ahmad al-Sa'id.

During the evening of 12 November, we met in Muslih's home in Dhahrat Laban, west of Riyadh, where the four us — myself, 'Abd al-Aziz al-Mi'thim; Muslih al-Shamrani; Riyadh Sulayman al-Hajiri; and Khalid Ahmad al-Sa'id — put the explosives in the boot of the old Alonit Mitsubishi car that Khalid al-Sa'id and Riyadh al-Hajiri had brought to this house about a week before the date set for the bombing.

After we put the explosives in the car trunk, Khalid al-Sa'id primed the explosives and the four of us agreed to meet during the morning of 13 November, to take the car and go to the location of the bombing.

During the morning of 13 November, the four of us met in the [aforementioned] house, and Khalid al-Sa'id and Riyadh al-Hajiri took the mined Mitsubishi Alonit; Khalid al-Sa'id was driving. He took off his clothes and put on Pakistani clothes. Khalid al-Sa'id was wearing a beige Pakistani outfit and a headdress, while Riyadh al-Hajiri was wearing a dark brown Pakistani outfit. I and Muslih al-Shamrani were driving behind them in a red Dodge, while they were driving ahead of us in the Mitsubishi Alonit car.

After leaving the house we drove toward the road "that I will pinpoint on the map." After leaving the house we took the Mecca Highway called Lane 100 and drove along this road until we reached the Pan-Arab Road toward the east. We then reached King Fahd Road and we took it and drove toward the south until we came across these crossroads. We then returned to King Fahd Road toward the north and we entered from Prince Sultan Street, which is called Street 30.

"Now I move to a clearer map."

After entering Street 30 we drove until we stopped outside the building housing the [military] mission on the opposite street.

"Now I move to the relief map."

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This is Prince Sultan Street, which is Street 30. We drove from here until we stopped, myself and Muslih al-Shamrani, aboard the red Dodge car at this level or exit, then Khalid and Riyadh moved on until they reached the agreed place where they picked up the parcel before returning along Street 30 toward the west.

Afterward they [Khalid and Riyadh] reached the car lots of this building before driving in aboard the [word indistinct] Mitsubishi vehicle. They then stopped outside the main entrance somewhere here. Meanwhile, I was still aboard Muslih's red Dodge car and I arrived in this area in order to monitor the situation and warn them about any danger they might encounter.

Then Khalid al-Sa'id and Riyadh got out and Khalid al-Sa'id set the timer for the explosion. Then we set off together towards Muslih al-Shamrani's car. I sat in front and Khalid al-Sa'id and Riyadh al-Hajiri were in the back. We left the area at top speed, at about 1100 on the morning of that day. After we got out of the area and were some distance from it on our way home, we heard the roar of the explosion at about 1120.

Then Riyadh Sulayman Ishaq al-Hajiri made his statement:

Riyadh Sulayman Ishaq al-Hajiri, of Saudi nationality, born in Medina in 1392 AH. I am 24 years old and live in the Dhahrah al-Badi'ah quarter of Riyadh. The beginning of my religious tendencies came about through a group of young men who used to visit me and whom I used to visit until I became influenced by them.

Our eagerness to visit Afghanistan and the jihad grew. I did in fact go to Afghanistan and stayed there for about three years. While I was there, I was trained to use many heavy and light weapons and I took part in some jihad operations.

While I was there, I got to know and met groups of various nationalities who had books which declared that states, governments, and ulema were unbelievers, including some books which said the government of Saudi Arabia and Saudi ulema — Bin-Baz and Bin-'Athimin — were unbelievers.

After I returned from Afghanistan to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, I found other young men who shared my intellectual tendency in questions of declaring states, governments, and ulema to be unbelievers. I have already mentioned their names in the minutes of the inquiry.

I had a fax machine with which I used to receive the leaflets of Mas'ari and 'Usamah Bin-Ladin, and also leaflets from the Islamic groups in Egypt and the Ansar groups, and I used to brief youths about them. Afterwards, our meetings continued in our homes and in the house of Muslih al-Shamrani. It was me, Khalid al-Sa'id, Muslih al-Shamrani, and Abd-al-'Aziz al-Mi'thim. It was in 1415 AH [corresponding to 1995]. We were then thinking about engaging in Jihad-related operations in the kingdom, including kidnapping and the assassination of some officials, but we decided against this for fear of being exposed.

Then we thought about bombing government offices, but we finally decided to act against the Americans. We found several places that we could bomb, but we decided to blow up the premises of the American mission in charge of training the National Guard, in al-Thalathin [30] street, al-'Ulayya. The four of us held meetings to examine what we would need for such an operation. We saw that we would need explosives and a car. We decided a role for each of us: 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Mi'thim and Muslih al-Shamrani were to procure explosives, while myself and Khalid al-Sa'id would provide a vehicle.

In fact, Muslih al-Shamrani and 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Mi'thim went to Yemen and smuggled in explosives one month before the bombing and we hid them in the house of Muslih al-Shamrani in Dhahrat Laban.

Approximately one week before the incident, I brought an old 1981 Mitsubishi car and hid it in the yard at Dhahrat Laban.

After that our meetings continued. On the eve of 20 Jumada al-Thani 1416 Hegara [13 November 1995], we met in the evening in the yard at Dhahrat Laban so that Khalid al-Sa'id could prime the explosives as he was trained in Afghanistan. I, Muslih al-Shamrani and 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Mi'thim helped him in putting the explosives in the car. When we finished we agreed to return in the morning to carry out the operation on 20 Jumada al-Thani 1416 Hegara.

On the morning of the day of the operation, we met in the yard. I and Khalid al-Sa'id put on Pakistani clothes. My clothes were brown and Khalid's were beige and he was wearing a turban. As for Muslih al-Shamrani and 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Mi'thim they were wearing Saudi clothes.

After that I and Khalid al-Sa'id took the booby-trapped car — Khalid al-Sa'id was driving. Muslih al-Shamrani and 'Abd-al-Aziz al-Mi'thim were following us in Muslih's red Dodge. We left the yard approximately at 1000 [local time].

After that we went to Route 100, which is the Mecca highway, until we reached Urubah road. We continued along Urubah road and passed King Khalid eye hospital until we reached King Fahd road. We proceeded along

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King Fahd road from the south until we reached a complex of overpasses.

When we got to the overpasses, we went back down the same King Fahd road towards the north until we came to the intersection with the Prince Sultan road, which is the al-Thalathin [30] road, and we went into it.

We entered the Prince Sultan road, al-Thalathin road, until we reached the car park of the American mission. Muslih al-Shamrani stopped his red Dodge car as we had agreed, while I and Khalid al-Sa'id drove on in the booby-trapped car until we reached the traffic lights. We then drove back down the same road until we reached the parking lot. We drove the car into the parking lot of the American mission for training the [Saudi] National Guard and we parked it near the building.

After that Khalid al-Sa'id and I got out of the car and Khalid al-Sa'id set the timing device.

After that we left the parking lot at around 1100 and got into the car with Muslih and quickly left through the back streets. On the way to our homes we heard the noise of the explosion. That was at around 1120 in the morning.

We wanted to carry out suicide jihad operations after the success of this operation, however, we were arrested. God is my witness and peace be upon you.

Afterwards Muslih 'Ali 'Aydh al-Shamrani made his confession and said:

My name is Muslih Ali 'Aydh al-Shamrani; I am a Saudi national born in Riyadh in 1388 Hegara [approximately 1968]; I am married and I live in the district of al-'Arija' in the city of Riyadh.

I worked previously as a government employee before leaving that post and getting involved in business. I was then approached by members of the al-Tabligh Group affiliated to Bin Jibrin. I was so influenced by this group that I neglected my clothes and grew a beard. I also obtained a passport to take part in the jihad in Afghanistan.

I did in fact travel to Afghanistan and join the al-Faruq Camp where I was trained for three months in the use of light and heavy weapons. During my stay in Afghanistan I met people of various nationalities who charge rulers and scholars with blasphemy.

During my stay in Afghanistan I carried out several operations until the holy war was over in Afghanistan. From there I went to Bosnia-Herzegovina to take part in the holy war there. I spent four months in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Afterwards I came to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia where I met some brethren such as Khalid al-Sa'id and Riyadh al-Hajiri whom I had met in Afghanistan. Through Riyadh al-Hajiri I met 'Abd-al-Aziz al-Mi'thim and some of the brethren you mentioned in the investigation file.

We used to visit each other, and we used to receive a number of pamphlets that were in the same vein, accusing the rulers and theologians of blasphemy. Some of these pamphlets were either released by Muhammad al-Mas'ari, Usamah Bin Ladin, or by Islamic groups like the Algerian 'al-Ansar' [close to the Algerian Islamic Armed Group], and the Egyptian Islamic groups, as well as those released by 'Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi. All these leaflets were talking about the internal situation in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; accusing its rulers of blasphemy for not following God's Shari'ah, for implementing man-made laws, and for joining the United Nations. These leaflets also declared theologians, like Bin al-Baz and al-Athimi, to be apostates for trying to sing the praises of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The four of us, Khalid al-Sa'id, Riyadh al-Hajiri and 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Mi'thim [only three names given], decided to carry out an act of jihad inside the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia by killing or assassinating [a number of people]. But we were afraid of being discovered. So we held a number of meetings and agreed to carry out acts against Americans inside the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. We examined a number of targets before deciding that our best option would be the building that housed the American mission for training the [Saudi] National Guard.

The four of us, Khalid al-Sa'id, Riyadh al-Hajiri, 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Mi'thim, and Muslih al-Shamrani met and agreed to split into two groups, one to bring explosives from Yemen and the other to find the vehicle to be used in the attack.

Indeed, I travelled with 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Mi'thim to Najran where we met a Yemeni person whom I had met previously. We told him of our wish to take explosives into the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia via a smugglers route. The aforementioned expressed his readiness to help us. We moved along the smugglers route until we reached an arms and explosives market in Yemen.

We bought the explosives that were paid for by 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Mi'thim. Later, we surreptitiously entered the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia via the smugglers route and then moved toward Riyadh.

Later, we went to a house that belongs to me in Dhahrah Laban to hide the explosives in the house. Then, we told Khalid al-Sa'id and Riyadh al-Hajiri that we had

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brought the explosives and a succession of meetings took place between the four of us.

On the night of 13 November 1995, the four of us met in my house in Dhahrah Laban and we moved the explosives and put them inside the old Mitsubishi, which was brought earlier by Riyadh al-Hajiri and Khalid al-Sa'id.

Khalid, who had experience and practice from the days of the Afghan jihad, primed these explosives and made them ready.

On the morning of 13 November 1995, we four met in the house. Khalid al-Sa'id and Riyadh al-Hajiri donned Pakistani clothes. Khalid al-Sa'id had a beige suit and he put on a turban. Riyadh al-Hajiri had a brown suit. Khalid al-Sa'id drove the car carrying the explosives. Riyadh al-Hajiri was at his side.

The car carrying the explosives was in front and 'Abd-al-'Aziz and I were in my "Dodge" car.

Then Khalid al-Sa'id made his confession, saying:

Yes, I am Khalid Ahmad Ibrahim al-Sa'id, of Saudi nationality, born in Riyadh in 1971. I am 24 years old and live in the Urayja quarter of Riyadh. At present I am self-employed.

My religious tendency began under the influences of sermons, lectures, and religious symposiums. I subsequently got to know and I met people with the same religious tendency. Then I let my beard grow, shortened my garment, and thought of joining the Afghan mujahidin. I did in fact go to Afghanistan and was trained in the use of many light and heavy weapons.

Through taking part with the Afghan mojahedin in their jihad operations, I learned how to prime explosives. During my stay in Afghanistan I got to know and met people of any different nationalities who had ideas calling for rulers and ulema to be declared unbelievers.

These ideas subsequently took root in my mind. I then returned from Afghanistan to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and became acquainted with people who had the same ideas and methodology which calls for ulema like Bin-Baz and and al-'Athimin to be declared unbelievers. I have mentioned them in the minutes of the inquiry.

Since 1415 AH we began to have the idea of carrying out jihad operations, influenced by the pamphlets issued by al-Mas'ari, 'Usamah Bin-Ladin and some Islamic groups calling for the Saudi government to be declared unbelievers, which we read.

We four — I, Khalid al-Sa'id; Riyadh al-Hajiri, 'Abd-al—Aziz al-Mi'thim, and Muslih al-Shamrani — considered carrying out jihad operations.

We considered carrying out kidnappings and assassinations, but decided they were not appropriate, because we could easily be discovered carrying out these operations.

We found that it would be easy and appropriate for us to engage in a bombing operation, which would come down to planting an explosive device outside a building and then leaving without being found out afterwards. We examined several government buildings, but in the end we decided to blow up the premises of the American mission for training the National Guard in al-Thalathin [30] street, in 'Ulayya, in Riyadh.

After a few successive meetings, the four of us decided to blow up the the premises in question. The group divided into two: a group composed of 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Mi'thim and Muslih al-Shamrani, whose role would be to procure explosives from Yemen, and a group consisting of me, Khalid al-Sa'id and Riyadh al-Hajiri charged with procuring a vehicle and placing the explosives in it, after bringing them in from Yemen.

They indeed smuggled themselves into Yemen and brought back the explosives into Saudi Arabia. They hid the explosives in the house of Muslih al-Shamrani in Dhahrat Laban, to the west of Riyadh, about one month before the operation.

A week before the explosion, Riyadh al-Hajiri brought a Mitsubishi One Eight [as received], 1981 model. After a succession of meetings, the four of us met on the night [before] 20 Jumada al-Thani 1416 AH [13 November 1995] in a house that belonged to Muslih al-Shamrani in Dhahrah Laban, west of Riyadh. We put the explosives in the trunk of the car, which was brought by Riyadh al-Hajiri, and in view of my experience with explosives and participation in military operations with Afghan mojahedin, I primed the explosives as shown in the diagram drawn by me. [passage omitted]

The four of us agreed to be present the next day, 20 Jumada al-Thani 1416 AH [13 November 1995] in the morning to take the booby-trapped One Eight from Muslih al-Shamrani's house to the location of the explosion in front of U.S. mission's building in al-Thalathin [30] Street in al-'Ulayya, Riyadh.

Indeed, in the morning of the next day, 20 Jumada al-Thani 1416 AH, we met in the house. I wore a beige Pakistani outfit and a red turban on my head. Riyadh al-Hajiri wore a dark brown Pakistani outfit with nothing on his head. I drove the booby-trapped Mitsubishi and Riyadh al-Hajiri sat next to me. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Mi'thim and Muslih al-Shamrani followed us in Muslih al-Shamrani's red Dodge.

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[Passage omitted] After reaching the overpass, we turned to King Fahd Road heading towards the north. This road meets Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Road known by the name of al-Thalathin Street [30] in 'Ulayya on which the headquarters of the American mission in situated.

We went along al-Thalathin Street and I was at the front in my booby-trapped car followed by Muslih al-Shamrani and 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Mi'thim in Muslih al-Shamrani's car. Muslih al-Shamrani parked his red Dodge car at that place and I continued until the traffic was light. After that we returned by the same street heading west.

After that I drove the car into the parking lot of the headquarters of the American mission at about 1100 in the morning.

After that Riyadh al-Hajiri and I got out of the booby-trapped Mitsubishi car. I primed the explosives with the timer and I set it at about 1120. We then left the parking lot toward the car of Muslih al-Shamrani. We drove his car along that road and we took the back streets to our houses.

On our way to our houses, we heard the echo of the explosion which was about 1120.

We were planning to carry out similar operations when we were arrested. This is all I have to say about the bombing operation that took place in front of the headquarters of the American mission and may God be my witness.

Saudi Arabia: English Version of Minister's Statement on Confessions

LD2204153296 Riyadh SPA in English 1246 GMT 22 Apr 96

[Quotation marks as received]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jeddah, April 22, SPA — Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the minister of interior, has announced the capture of the culprits who perpetrated the explosion incident in Riyadh on Monday, 20/6/1416.

"With the grace of the Almighty Allah and as a result of the intensive security measures undertaken by the general intelligence men without any help from inside or outside the kingdom, with the exception of the help of the almighty Allah, the culprits who committed the explosion incident in Riyadh, have been arrested, said Prince Nayif in an address telecast here today.

On behalf of Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, Crown Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the deputy premier and commander of the National Guard, and Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the second deputy premier, defence and aviation minister and inspector general, I would like to express appreciation for the achievement accomplished by the officials of the general intelligence and in particular director of the General Intelligence General Salih Taha Khusayfan.

"We thank the Almighty Allah for this great achievement and it would be better to always take into account that it is our duty to shoulder our responsibility towards our religion and to do our best to protect our country from the alien trends to our way of thinking.

It has become essential to have a decisive and firm response vis-a-vis those who attempt to undermine our creed, nation and potentialities. The security, stability and prosperity we are now enjoying are continuation to the foundation set by King 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Sa'ud.

I would like to express appreciation for the attention given by the citizens and the concerned authorities to this incident and to make it clear that so far we have not yet touched any linkage between this incident and the incident of smuggling explosives into the kingdom via al-Hadithah city last month.

Following the investigations and the confessions of the culprits, the culprits will be tried according to the shari'ah.

It is a pity that the culprits are from the sons of this dear country, known for its adherence to its religion and loyalty to the king and homeland.

"The culprits are 'Abd-al-'Aziz Bin-Fahd Nasir al-Mu'thim, Riyadh Sulayman Ishaq al-Hajiri, Muslih 'Ali 'Aydh al-Shamrani and Khalid Ahmad Ibrahim al-Sa'id.

'Abd-al-'Aziz Bin-Fahd Nasir al-Mu'thim: born in al-Kharj city in 1392h, he is about 24 year old and holder of the certificate of second class of a secondory school. He resides at al-Shifa' quarter in Riyadh and works in the field of free business. He was affected in his religous ideas by one of his relatives and met some youngsters from various nationalities who had earlier joined Afghan jihad.

The extremist ideas he has been acquainted with, view the rulers of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the rulers of the other Arab countries as well as the members of the commission of the senior ulema (muslim scholars) as infidels. He said he along with the other younsters used to receive the bulletins issued by al-Mas'ari and Usamah Bin-Ladin as well as other bulletins issued by the Islamic groups in Egypt and Algeria. 'When I read the book of 'Millat Ibrahim' [The Creed of Ibrahim] written by Muhammad 'Isam al-Maqdasi, I travelled

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to Jordan to visit the writer and i was affected by his ideas [word indistinct] of the Arab countries including this country and the members of the commission of the senior ulema,' he elaborated.

The extremist ideas criticized the kingdom for accepting rules of the United Nations and the International Court of Justice and for maintaining friendly relations with the non-Islamic countries. These ideas also view the senior ulema including Shaykh Bin-Baz and Shaykh Bin 'Uthaymin as infidels because they flatter the rulers of this country.

'In 1415h, Muslih al-Shamrani, Khalid al-Sa'id, Riyadh al-Hajiri and me held a joint meeting and reviewed the possibility of carrying out some operations like kidnapping and assassinations, but afraid of being detected, we thought of other options and thought of carrying out explosions at the buildings of the governmental departments. Later, we decided to explode the building of the American mission for the development of the National Guard in Riyadh.

A month before the fixed date for the explosion, I drived [as received] to Najran. In Najran I met a Yemeni who helped me to enter Yemen illegally. In Yemen, I bought the explosives (TNT) and a number of guns and smuggled them into the kingdom.

We continued our secret meetings' and on 20/6/1416 h evening, we met in a house located in west of Riyadh and put the explosives inside an old pick-up.

On the morning of 20/6/1416 h, Khalid al-Sa'id accompanied by Riyad al-Hajiri, drove the pick-up, while Muslih al-Shamrani and me drove another car. From Mecca highway, we turned to the east and arrived at King Fahd road. From King Fahd road, we drove to Prince Sultan street until we reached the building of the American mission for the development of the National Guard. Khalid and Riyadh drove to the parking plot of the building but Muslih and I waited in our car along the road watching carefully what was going on.

Saudi Arabia: Reform Movement Bulletin on Bombers' 'Confessions'

MM2304142796 London AL-ISLAH in Arabic 22 Apr 96

[Bulletin No. 6 issued by the Islamic Reform Movement of Saudi Arabia: "Pausing To Consider Events" — received by fax]

[FBIS Translated Text] The reports about the group accused of the Riyadh explosion and the recorded statements made by them on Saudi television were the event that dominated people's attention today. So this event should not be allowed to pass without analysis and comment. We have tried to explore the circumstances that surrounded the dissemination of these reports and the way the confessions and their contents were displayed, and to link them to information we have received from within the regime's apparatus, and have thus reached the following conclusions:

First: It transpires that the accused group come from within the heart of the Arabian Peninsula. If the attribution of the aforementioned action to this group proves true, then it will affirm what we have been saying all the time in our analyses: that the Riyadh explosion was carried out by a group acting from within the country.

In our previous analyses we have affirmed that the regime's actions have been driving young zealots to take that course [of violence] and that the people of the Arabian Peninsula do not lack courage and daring. Many people wrongly believe that the people of the Arabian Peninsula are naturally disposed to acquiescence and appeasement. In fact, history testifies that the people of the Arabian Peninsula are disciplined by nothing other than religion. This is a fact which the Saudi dynasty could readily recognize if it were to review history. For the Kingdom was established by the force of religion only, and stability prevailed in it only under the umbrella of religion.

It was only when suspicions spread about 'Abd-al-'Aziz and his being an agent of the British that the Brethren Revolution [Thawrat al-'Ikhwan] broke out. The regime's hasty implementation of its Westernization project a few years ago provoked the Juhayman group [not further identified] and thus led to the mosque incident.

The fact is that due to their desert character, the people of the Arabian Peninsula are more inclined to violence than to tranquillity. Indeed, they can only be disciplined by religion; no ruler can tame them and ensure their obedience to him unless he himself is worthy of obedience in return for his adherence to his duties under the Islamic laws.

Second: As the psychological and moral conditions developed as a result of the regime's actions and the experience gained by the Kingdom's youth in the field of holy struggle, the financial conditions developed as a result of the Kingdom's spaciousness, the availability of arms, the shaky character of its security machinery, and its backward administration. As the conditions led to the aforementioned incident [the Riyadh explosion], they are bound to lead to a further repetition of the incident.

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Third: The confessions broadcast on the television screens implied that the incident was the work of that group only. This, however, is something that deserves exploration. The blowing up of the American building in Riyadh was perfect not only in the technical sense but also in the political and moral sense. The explosion took place at a sensitive point in time and at a sensitive place and caused the death of non-Muslims only. Observers are unanimous that the operation was carried out perfectly in terms of method, timing, place, and target. The regime is well aware that the number [of the accused] is not enough to explain the operation. But the regime found itself obliged to speed up the announcement of the report and broadcast television reports about it in an attempt to restore confidence in its ability to maintain order and security.

Fourth: The regime broadcast the report and the recorded statements in such a manner as to imply that everything they [the accused] said was a crime, starting with growing beards, shortening their dress, consorting with religious youth, and attending religious sermons and lessons, and ending with deserting the idols and branding as infidels all those who seek the idols' adjudication. This is a new method being followed by the Saudi dynasty which it dared not adopt in the past because of its concern to preserve religious formalities and slogans. Indeed the regime has gone to the extent of claiming through its interior minister that it will seek adjudication in God's laws. This truly indicates that a change has begun to take place in the Saudi dynasty's policy toward copying other Arab regimes in spreading fear in the hearts of those who grow beards, shorten their clothes, or consort with religious youth because all these actions indicate association with "terrorism and sabotage." The regime and its allies among the Arab regimes want to turn this into a curse and a disgraceful quality that makes all who are branded with it hide themselves [out of shame].

Fifth: Through these televised statements, which nobody doubts were actually written for those who uttered them to read, the regime sought to incriminate more than one party at the same time. Indeed, it resorted to the method of generalities which the people abhor. The televised statements were fraught with lies about the Mujahidin of Afghanistan and Bosnia and about the committee's [Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights] bulletins and those of the Advice and Reform Body [Hay'at al-Nush wa al-Islah]. They were intended to make the viewer think that anyone who takes part in holy struggle and politics will inevitably end by adopting the ideology of "extremist" repudiation.

Sixth: The organizer of the interview and whoever wrote the material that was read during it was fully aware that it would be futile to defend the regime and the rulers and that the viewers care nothing about attacks on the rulers. For this reason, strong emphasis was placed on the repudiation of Shaykh Bin-Baz and Shaykh Bin-'Athimin. Those who watched the televised statements noted the forceful manifestation of this aspect. It seems this was the only way the regime could find to distort the image of that group through the statements they read.

The regime is aware that there are many people who oppose it on legitimate grounds and who oppose the Americans and indeed fight them on legitimate grounds. Apparently the organizer of the interview knew that the viewers would not feel much enthusiasm for the incrimination of a person who had destroyed an American building and led to the killing of a number of Americans. Indeed, the people expressed their feelings early on, that if the victims were Americans, they would not care. For this reason, the regime avoided — firstly when it announced the news of the incident and lastly when it reported the news of arrests and confessions — making any reference whatsoever to the Americans, as though considering that the repudiation of Shaykh Bin-Baz and Bin-'Athimin was a safer way of incriminating them.

Seventh: The conditions that led to the explosion have not changed. The televised statements affirmed some aspect of this. The regime has contained all methods of expression and all forms of assemblies and thus the arena is open only to those who chant and propagandize for the regime. Salman al-'Awdah was arrested just because he organized a series of lessons for his supporters in his house after having been prevented from delivering lessons in the mosque. Merely delivering sermons and talking about heaven and hell have become a crime in the eyes of the Saudi dynasty unless it contains glorification for those in power, their sanctification, and obedience to their guidelines.

The regime has also resorted to direct provocation and sought to arouse the fury of the zealous youth by its series of successive arrests and long list of dismissals. Indeed, the regime went even further than that by asking the judicial apparatus to pass a number of unjust sentences. The regime also granted powers to its henchmen to torture the youth in the detention camps. Finally, it broke the barrier of blood by its assassination of martyr 'Abdallah al-Mudif, one of the men of the awakening. What is worse is that the regime went about bragging about al-Mudif's murder, regarding it as one of the regime's heroic achievements.

On the other hand, the Saudi dynasty is dealing with the legitimate leaderships which control the youth in a grave manner: On the one hand, they imprisoned the approved

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and highly creditable independent leaderships, thus severing all contact between them and their followers, and on the other hand, they discredited the official ulemas by using them to justify the state's crimes, so that they no longer have any real credibility.

Eighth: There is no doubt that the arrest of members of the aforementioned group and the dissemination of their confessions in this manner on television will appear as a great political achievement for the regime, about which it should rejoice. But those who follow the development of events believe that the regime has achieved more than just one political gain in a short space of time. A few weeks ago, it appeared as if the "committee" which traumatized the regime and struck it in a deadly spot had collapsed. During the past two months, the price of oil rose contrary to all expectations and settled above $20. So what has happened? How can the regime score all these successes, while the Call [against it] suffers one defeat after another? Are not the reformers advocates of right, raisers of the banners of reform, and hard workers in the call to do good and shun evil? Are not the pillars of the regime oppressive dictators and tyrants who change God's laws and who fight against the Call and the people of the Call? How then does it appear time after time that the pillars of the regime are the winners and the Call and the people of the Call are losing?

This is the main objective. Here lies the real trial and big tribulation awaiting the country. It is a trial for both sides: for the regime to persist with its arrogance and prowess, and for the people of the Call, the reformers and banner raisers, to prove who among them can be patient and tolerant, cast aside despair, and believe in God's promise and his support.

Let those who are patient feel happy and reassured: This respite and inducement that is given to the oppressors will be the road that leads to their end. What appears as success for the wrong is actually a [test of] discernment and discrimination among the people of the Call. People may withstand imprisonment, torture, and tribulations affecting their means of subsistence and health, but they cannot withstand despair and loss of hope.

Saudi Arabia: Bombing Suspects' Link to Dissident Seen as Spurious

MM2304151296 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 23 Apr 96 p 1

[Report by Sulayman Nimr: "Al-Mas'ari's Committee Accuses Saudi Arabia of Preparing To Eliminate Him Following Arrest of Elements Who Are Suspected of Bombing Marine Building 'and Who Were Influenced by His Ideology'"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Riyadh, London, AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI — The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia announced yesterday the arrest of four Saudi Islamists who had links with Afghan mujahidin. They confessed on television that they had carried out the booby-trapped-car attack on a U.S. military center in Riyadh on 13 November 1995, killing seven people.

Saudi Interior Minister Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz said that the suspects, three of whom had been trained in Afghanistan, had obtained explosives from Yemen to carry out the attack. [passage omitted]

The television said that the four stressed that they had been influenced by the ideology of some opponents of the Saudi regime: Muhammad al-Mas'ari, who lives in exile in London and whose extradition is sought by Riyadh; Usamah Bin Ladin, who lived in Sudan until recently; and Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi, a Jordanian Islamist believed to be living in Jordan. [passage omitted]

Al-Mas'ari has denied any link with or influence over the suspects. He said that "everyone knows that confessions in Saudi Arabia are extracted by force." However, he pointed out that "it is possible that these men have a link with the attack, since it is difficult to fabricate full confessions from nothing."

Al-Mas'ari accused the Saudi authorities of "tampering with the confessions so as to make them appear integrated," specifically by mentioning the names of known dissidents and by forcing the suspects to say that they had been influenced by the leaflets issued by these dissidents. Kassab al-'Utaybi, director of the "Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights in Saudi Arabia" in London has told AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI that the threat to the life of al-Mas'ari and his colleagues has increased after the new accusations.

He said that the British are convinced that al-Mas'ari has no link with any terrorist organization. This was stressed by the judge who revoked the recent decision to deport him.

He added that "al-Mas'ari's bulletins are known to everyone, read by 50 percent of the Saudi people, and advocate peaceful change."

He went on to say: "Actually the Saudi regime no longer needs opposition from abroad, since the elements of corruption and collapse are increasing within its structure."

He stressed that the suspects who appeared on the Saudi television had made the confessions under torture

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— which explains the strange similarity between their statements.

Observers believe that the Saudi Government's inclusion of Dr. al-Mas'ari's name in the case of the Marine building explosion in Riyadh could be a prelude to his assassination. [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia: 'Ideological' Action Urged Against Terrorism

MM2304155896 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 23 Apr 96 p 9

[Article by Chief Editor 'Uthman al-'Umayr: "From 'Brainwashing' to Acts of Sabotage"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Although the security option has been successful and proved its usefulness, the solution that must accompany it should be to foster ideological awareness to combat this state of mental and ideological corruption in our societies.

Many of those who followed Saudi Interior Minister Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz's revelations [on the arrest of suspects in the Riyadh bombing case] would have been aware of, and perhaps felt, a deep sadness caused by the fact that those who were responsible for the blast are Saudis.

Not that the Saudi is a different human being, immune from what applies to his fellow human beings in other countries of the world, but because this type of terrorism is alien to Saudi society and to the nature of the Saudi. More importantly, this skillfully and openly reveals the seriousness of this illness, this odious fanaticism — which is terrorism's natural father and which wreaks havoc on society, hinders its progress, and weakens its capacity for movement. When you lose your mental balance, forget your intellectual limitations, reject the principle of recognizing others, and oppose the feeling of opening up, then you are undoubtedly heading toward fanaticism, which begets and nurtures terrorism.

Frankly speaking, and in saying this we were preceded by the Saudi Interio Ministry's statement and the suspects' confessions, this tragedy that we are experiencing was caused by this type of odious intellectual extremism.

Extremism has been called many things. Ultimately, however, it is a backward concept which produces human specimens like those four who, through brainwashing and misguided, false ideas, were led to carry out a despicable act which claims innocent lives and by which they try to undermine the security of a country which was and still is proud of its ability to maintain and defend its security. We would be wrong again to underestimate those calls in our midst and the intellectual language which has pervaded our Arab country in the name of religion, reserving for itself alone the right to appraise people, enter their hearts' recesses, and distribute absolution to them.

Because of the freedom they were allowed and, first and foremost, because of their capacity for ideological terrorism, these poisoned circles, which have their institutions their and party, media, and ideological organs, have succeeded in twisting the ideas of the young and directing their mental abilities onto dangerous tracks, the results of which we have seen in many Arab homes throughout our Arab homeland.

These forces have succeeded in hiding their goals and objectives from many people. In the West, they are civilized elements fighting for man's freedom and defending democracy, and even go as far as tolerance with regard to what is sacred to the Muslim individual in order to achieve their political goals, while inside they nurture and encourage terrorism and back it, as we have seen in many Muslim countries. Two contradictory discourses and a maelstrom of quarrels and deep debate in order to gain control of the resources of that country under bright slogans which are reminiscent of the past Marxist era — and in fact they embody that era, with its framework and actions, except that it has changed from red to green.

It is enough that this group and other groups of this kind do not have a single link to Islam or its people. One of Islam's precepts is to reject terrorism, condemn violence, and refuse to carry out any action that would claim any soul whom God willed to live.

We are in no position to direct accusations at any specific quarter. We can say, however, that there is more than one quarter responsible for the fate of some of the nation's young, whereby they have chosen the path of armed violence, believing that this would change society, thereby preventing man from making a positive contribution to the cycle of progress and development.

The Riyadh blast and the disclosures about it present us with two important facts:

First: Saudi security, as reiterated by its official, has once again reaffirmed its effectiveness and ability to rapidly unmask those who were behind this terrorist act and carried it out.

This ability, which led to the discovery [of the suspects], shows the importance of the serious method which Saudi Arabia has adopted in dealing with various forms of terrorism, and this is its response to those who have repeatedly mentioned its human rights violations. Such an effective security organ deserves to be

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congratulated on its performance. It is a brilliant performance, manifested in the case of this crime as it was in others before.

Second, there is no longer any need to state the necessity for adopting a frank stand against the forces which are still proposing various bright slogans alien to Islamic precepts and principles, despite their claims to the contrary. It is not enough for governments and security organs to take this stand. It must also be taken by the social, political, and religious forces in our Arab land. In addition, the process of improving understanding and educational frameworks should be speeded up, with an improved response to the spirit of the age and the facts of life, which no longer allow for the causes of underdevelopment and for toying with slogans in the minds of simple people and the general public.

Although the security option has been successful and proved its usefulness, the solution which must accompany it should be to foster ideological awareness and hasten to achieve an infrastructure capable of combating this type of mental and intellectual corruption in our societies. These past experiences are perhaps the best proof of what could be achieved.

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Iraq: Oil Talks With UN To Resume 24 Apr

JN2304171996 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1646 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The United Nations, 23 Apr (INA)—Iraqi and UN delegations will resume their working dialogue sessions on the issue of exchanging oil for food, medicine, and other basic needs of the Iraqi people tomorrow. The United Nations announced today that a new dialogue session in the third round of talks will begin at 1300, New York time, tomorrow.

The dialogue sessions began on 8 April. The Iraqi side to the talks is headed by Dr. 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari, and the UN side to the talks is headed by Hans Corell, UN under secretary general for legal affairs.

Iraq: Foreign Ministry Condemns U.S. Official's Visit to North

JN2304121796 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1116 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 23 Apr (INA) — A Foreign Ministry spokesman made a statement to INA today commenting on the illegal entry to northern Iraq of Robert Deutch, director of northern Gulf affairs at the U.S. State Department, and some of his assistants. Deutch held contacts on behalf of the U.S. Administration with rebel Kurdish factions in northern Iraq, as reported in a statement issued by the U.S. Embassy in Ankara on 20 April 1996.

The spokesman said: The Republic of Iraq Government reasserts its strong condemnation of this thoughtless U.S. conduct, which is part of a series of acts of aggression and flagrant interference in Iraq's internal affairs. This conduct is also in line with feverish U.S. attempts to maintain U.S. control over its agents in northern Iraq. The United States manipulates those agents to serve its suspect objectives and schemes. The purpose of this is to maintain the abnormal situation in northern Iraq and cause severe harm to the Iraqi people, including its Arabs and Kurds, by preventing the Kurdish parties from returning to national ranks.

The spokesman added: It is now clear to the Iraqi, Arab, and international public that one of the main reasons for the deterioration in security, political, and living conditions is foreign interference in the affairs of this region, especially U.S. interference, which is the main reason for complicating matters and creating a tragic situation. The sons of our people in the Autonomous Region of Kurdistan reject this cheap interference and hate Washington's agents who deal with this U.S. official. This official infiltrated into northern Iraq like thieves and criminals in a manner that conflicts with all international norms and laws. The United States falsely brags about such laws and norms.

The spokesman stressed that the Republic of Iraq Government strongly condemns such irresponsible practices against Iraq's sovereignty and reasserts that the only solution to address the deteriorating situation in northern Iraq and achieve security, stability, and order is to stop this foreign interference in the region. This would enable the state's legitimate authority to maintain the unity and sovereignty of Iraq and achieve security, stability, and prosperity for all the sons of the great Iraqi people.

Iraq: Assembly Condemns 'Brutal Aggression' Against Lebanon

JN2304100896 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1240 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 22 Apr (INA) — The National Assembly asserted that the new crime committed by the Zionist entity against Arab people in Lebanon is a clear violation of the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. A double-standard policy is being used in the name of international legitimacy, which is now a weapon in the hands of U.S. imperialism and its allies, the National Assembly said.

In a statement issued today, the National Assembly said this aggression unmasked the true face of the Zionist entity, which is a tool of U.S. imperialism and its allies to implement a hostile scheme against the Arab nation. This scheme targets the nation's existence and seeks to humiliate it and control its resources.

The statement added that the National Assembly strongly condemns this ugly crime and expresses solidarity with the sons of the Arab people in Lebanon. The statement also appealed to Arab parliaments and forces to side by the wounded Lebanese people, condemn this brutal aggression, and assist the displaced. Iraq and its people have always supported the Arab nation in confronting Zionist aggression against our struggling people. The 30-state aggression against Iraq was only one method of aggression against the Arab nation. The 30-state aggression sought to obstruct Iraq's pan-Arab mission that rejects Zionist existence.

Iraq: Murderer of Jordanian Student Arrested

JN2404101996 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1955 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 23 Apr (INA) — A responsible source at the Interior Ministry said homicide detectives investigating the murder of a Jordanian student, Middayn Sa'id 'Ali, which took place recently in

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Baghdad, have managed to arrest the murderer, Harith Hamid Khalaf, and discover how the crime was committed.

In a statement to INA, the source said the investigation was completed and the murderer was referred to court to receive his just punishment.

Iraq: Heads of Assembly Standing Committees Elected

JN2304101896 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1300 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 22 Apr (INA)—The National Assembly announced the names of the heads of its 10 standing committees who were elected in secret ballot in accordance with the Assembly's bylaws.

Sa'd Qasim was elected head of the Arab and International Relations Committee.

Dr Sultan al-Shawi, head of the Legal and Administrative Affairs Committee.

Muhammad Tahir al-Hiyali, head of the Agricultural Affairs Committee.

Hamid Yusuf Hammadi, head of the Culture, Information, Education, and Youth Committee.

Rasul Radi, head of the Financial Affairs Committee.

'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Hiti, head of the General Services and Citizens Affairs Committee.

Dr. Ghalib al-Jasim, head of the Awqaf and Religious Affairs and Health Committee.

Dr. Mundhir al-Alusi, head of the Oil, Energy, Industry, and Minerals Committee.

Khalid al-Sa'idi, head of the Human Rights Committee.

Mrs. Raja' [Murad al-Shawi], head of the Environment Committee.

The elections for the current term of the National Assembly were held on 24 March. The 250-member Assembly held its first session on 7 April.

Iraq: Opposition Spokesman Denies Allegations of Baghdad Bombings

MS2304093996 London INDEPENDENT in English 23 Apr 96 p 16

[Letter by S. A. Shaykhli, of Iraqi National Accord, London: "Iraqi Opposition Denies Bombings"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sir: We refer to Patrick Cockburn's article "Clinton backed Baghdad bombers" (26 March). Before offering this reply, we had to review the two versions of the video film on which Mr Cockburn based his article.

The story is a cheap attempt by those who produced the video and passed additional misinformation to Mr Cockburn to defame the Iraqi National Accord [INA] and its leadership. We wonder if Mr Cockburn has any additional evidence, apart from a video made by an unidentified person who goes under the pseudonym of Abu-Amnah al-Khadami [as published]. The harsh living conditions in Iraqi Kurdistan push many people to desperate measures to survive. The production of this video is one such example. Most of the video is taken up by innuendoes about who paid whom and how much is owed to him for his imaginary services. Those who understand Iraqi dialect would notice that Mr al-Khadami states that Al-Wifaq (Iraqi National Accord) has no capability of making bombs and have not been involved in any operation inside Iraq. He claims that he and his team alone are capable of perpetrating such acts.

Mr al-Khadami has never been a member of INA, and we have not at any time, neither do we intend now to enter into any bombing campaign or activities that might endanger the life of innocent civilian Iraqis. If Mr al-Kadhami was involved in a bombing campaign in Baghdad or Mosul, then it must have been on behalf of other organisations.

Who produced hundreds of copies of the video for distribution in Iraq Kurdistan, and who produced over 2,000 copies in Holland and posted them to Iraqis in the UK, Europe and USA? We believe this is a well-orchestrated campaign against the INA and its leaders.

Iraq: Article Links Economy, Iraqi Patience

96LH0145 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 31 Jan 96 p 5

[Article by Narmin Al-Mufti and Salih Al-Shaybani, including interview with Dr. Rasul Radi Habib, head of Administration and Economics of Al-Mustansiriyah University and the Scientific Committee in the Society of Iraqi Economists; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text]

What is the story? The story of prices is a question running through the mind of every citizen. The rapid decline in prices has made it possible for the citizens to buy items that were unavailable to them for the last five years and they ask, "What is the story?"

About the Story...

Frankly speaking, we in our capacity as citizens, or those who are endearingly called "people of limited

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income," were delighted by the drop in prices. This happiness is mixed with fear and hope that prices will stay at their current level and will not rise again. There are several reasons for fear, especially because, during the past two days, the prices of sugar and rice have registered a slight rise. Before delving into the story, we should take a walk through crowded markets. We recognize that we wound our way through with difficulty because of the large crowd and continuous rush of sales from early morning until the late hours. In the egg market in 'Alawi, an attractive woman stopped the large trucks carrying crates of eggs. Some of their owners asked the others there to buy what they had to sell. The other owners stood there quietly. A woman bought three cartons of eggs, happy to be carrying them to feed her young ones. Another citizen expressed his happiness that he had two cartons. When we asked him if he had discovered the secret of the drop in prices, he answered us that the secret was of no concern to him. He was happy and that was enough.

The Story is Economic.

Dr. Rasul Radi Habib, head of the Department of Economics in the College of Administration and Economics of Al-Mustansiriyah University and head of the Scientific Committee in the Society of Iraqi Economists, tells us the following "story" saying:

The large drop in prices of common commodities is attributable to the economic guarantees in the President's letter of 2 December 1995. These guarantees represented a comprehensive economic program aimed at controlling prices and then reducing them. Economic analysts have pointed out that the reduction in all types of government expenditures will create a balance between total demand and total supply. We expected it to take place a month after what happened this week, that is, next March.

[AL-JUMHURIYAH] What is happening now in the markets?

[Habib] The truth is that what is happening in the markets is the first stage of a decline in prices that will be completed in the future. This indicates that the leadership, with President and Leader Saddam Husayn at its head, has given assurances concerning the delicate economic issue of circulating of dollars, the regulation of its market, and a role to the banks to conduct all the money changing transactions that the law allows them. This means that economic, procedural, and scientific plans have already been prepared to confront future changes. It is certain that, with respect to the blockade, the doors have started coming open, thanks to political efforts and because the states of the world have recognized that Iraq has taken practical steps to implement the resolutions of the Security Council, its good intentions, and agreement to conduct a comprehensive dialogue with international organizations. It is certain that the remaining political arguments that the U.S. administration and its henchmen use against Iraq have started falling apart and vanishing. This factor has eliminated the psychological burden from which the Iraqi citizen has suffered.

[AL-JUMHURIYAH] We see that you are optimistic that prices will continue to decline.

[Habib] There are numerous reasons for this, including the decision to strengthen the performance of the Iraqi economy in accordance with the letter of the leader, to organize foreign currency exchanges, and the assurance that the supply of economic resources in the form of foreign currency will soon begin. Prices will continue falling because of psychological factors preoccupying businessmen and the actions of officials to manage the economy. This means a rise in the value of the Iraqi dinar, more economic activity, and greater production.

We don't know!!

[AL-JUMHURIYAH] When we asked about the story of Zuhayr Yunis 'Abd al-Ghaffur, head of the Iraqi Chamber of Commerce, he said:

[Habib] Believe me, I don't know. When you asked about the reason for the insane price rises, our answer was, "We don't know." Today our answer is still, "We don't know."

[Al-JUMHURIYAH] We heard that an agreement exists between the Ministry of Commerce and businessmen to open the storehouses in order to provide foodstuffs and various commodities so that both parties will bear the loss.

[Habib] There is no such agreement.

[AL-JUMHURIYAH] Will prices continue to fall?

[Habib] They may fall or stabilize, but on one important condition: that the citizenry cut back on their rush to the market and on their buying because the market is subject to the law of supply and demand. A rise in demand brings a rise in prices.

[AL-JUMHURIYAH] Is this the reason why sugar disappeared?

[Habib] Perhaps.

Will the Businessman Now Lose?

One of the businessmen answered us saying: "There is no loss because of the rising exchange rate of the Iraqi dinar vis—vis the dollar." In that case, why did prices

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rise insanely in the past? Some accuse invisible hands with interests in the market of having done that. There are people who accuse several of those who suddenly go into business so as to turn a quick profit and then get out as quickly as possible. If businessmene had been content with making a reasonable profit, the market would have stabilized long ago at an appropriate price level.

Iraq: Academic Interviewed on Hashemites, Future of Country

96LH0142A London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
7 Jan 96 pp 28-29

[Interview with Mustafa Hamarinah, head of the Jordanian University's Strategic Studies Institute, by an unidentified AL-MAJALLAH correspondent in Amman; date not given; followed by reports from Cairo by Basil Ramsis]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the midst of interpretations, expectations, and possibilities raised by General Husayn Kamil Hasan's defection to Jordan, some people have raised the possibility of the Hashemites returning to power in Iraq. In view of the importance of the issue, AL-MAJALLAH has chosen Mustafa Hamarinah, head of the Jordanian University's Strategic Studies Institute who worked as an adviser in the Jordanian royal court in the past, to ask him a few questions in this regard. The interview AL-MAJALLAH held with him follows:

[AL-MAJALLAH] Is there any real basis for the suggestion to restore the Hashemites' rule in Iraq?

[Hamarinah] Not at all. There is no sign to indicate that King Husayn is working in this direction. We have no proof that he has tried to rally social forces in Iraq or Jordan to achieve this objective.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Since the fall of the Hashemite throne in Iraq in 1958, was there any chance to restore this throne?

[Hamarinah] Yes. The second Gulf war and the atmosphere that prevailed then provided an excellent opportunity if King Husayn wanted to do that.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Have the Iraqis raised this issue?

[Hamarinah] They have not raised it officially, but I know that in February 1991, some Iraqi thinkers thought that the declaration of an immediate federation between Iraq and Jordan would be the only solution to the crisis. They never suggested this idea to any Jordanian or Iraqi official, and no one responded to it.

[AL-MAJALLAH] What is your opinion? Do you think that such an idea is acceptable?

[Hamarinah] This idea requires Jordanian approval. I think that King Husayn understands that no form of Iraqi-Jordanian unity is possible except under different regional and international balances of power. The proposal to establish a federation between Jordan and Iraq means toppling Saddam Husayn's regime first. This is apparently not on the current agenda of the regional and the international powers.

[AL-MAJALLAH] You said that there was an opportunity for the return of the Hashemites to power in Iraq but you did not say how?

[Hamarinah] I think that King Husayn did not exploit his huge popularity, which reached its peak at the beginning of the nineties, because he was not trying to restore his dynasty's rule in Iraq. Three factors combined to make King Husayn's popularity reach its peak. These were his position on the second Gulf war, the democratic changes in Jordan, and the popular sympathy following the famous surgery he had. However, he did not try to exploit this asset, particularly toward Iraq.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Can the Jordanian-Iraqi federation issue be raised again?

[Hamarinah] Everything is over now. International and regional conditions have changed. If King Husayn did not act when the conditions were appropriate, he will definitely not act now under the present difficult and complex conditions.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Why had King Husayn embraced Gen. Husayn Kamil and welcomed him in this way?

[Hamarinah] I have no answer to this perplexing question. I cannot give you a good answer, although there are many circulating scenarios.

[AL-MAJALLAH] If the blockade continues and Iraq explodes, what will Jordan do?

[Hamarinah] Nothing. Jordan has not tried to utilize the popular sympathy that appeared in Iraq, particularly during the Iraqi-Iranian war. I think that if Jordan wants to have a role in Iraq, it must agree with the countries around Iraq.

[AL-MAJALLAH] If Iraq's unity was really at risk, don't you think that a Jordanian role will become a regional and international demand?

[Hamarinah] Apart from Iran, I do not think that the countries in the region would accept any distinctive Jordanian role in Iraq. Iran raised the possibility of an understanding with Jordan regarding the future of the situation in Iraq, but King Husayn did not respond to this desire. I do not know the reason.

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[AL-MAJALLAH] Do you think that the United States and the Western countries support a distinctive Jordanian role in the Iraqi issue?

[Hamarinah] These countries are not concerned about King Husayn, Jordan, Iraq, or any other country or head of state. They only want to ensure their interests. I think that the situation in Iraq will remain frozen until after the next American elections in 1997. The blockade will not be removed, Saddam Husayn will not be replaced, and nothing will happen before this time.

Nuri 'Abd-al-Razzaq: Iraqi Society Changed, and There Is No Place for the Hashemites

Nuri 'Abd-al-Razzaq, secretary of the Cairo-based Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Organization, has affirmed that many changes have taken place in the Iraqi political situation and the social structure since the 1958 revolution. Therefore, it is difficult to imagine the Hashemites returning to power in Iraq.

He said that this issue was raised for discussion following the tragic deterioration in Iraq's situation on all levels. He noted the loss of the state's mechanism in a geographically divided Iraq and the drop in the people's standard of living below poverty level. This is at a time when Iraq was considered an oil-rich country.

'Abd-al-Razzaq added: The issue of the Hashemites and their return to power in Iraq is linked with the issue of Iraq's unity, following the appearance of several problems. These include the Kurdish problem and the sectarian problem, which President Saddam Husayn has promoted, and the appearance of a group of ethnic minorities. The issue of the Hashemites has been raised as part of a scenario to change the regime in Iraq, although no strong force in it is demanding the return of the Hashemites. In fact, there is no political movement championing this cause or has a program in this respect. Regarding the Jordanian ambition, 'Abd-al-Razzaq agrees that a Jordanian ambition to rule Iraq exists. The Jordanian regime, particularly King Husayn, played an important influential role in the developments in Iraq for many reasons: first, because Jordan is not a party to regional, pan-Arab, or sectarian conflicts; second, because Jordan does not have party, sectarian, or tribal extensions in Iraq to try to make one party win over the other; third, because Jordan entered Iraqi society through the first Gulf war and its support for Saddam Husayn in the Kuwait war. Consequently, 'Abd-al-Razzaq affirms that the recent Jordanian position regarding Husayn Kamil's defection must have been welcomed in Iraqi circles for his "moderate rational position."

'Abd-al-Razzaq rules out a possible return of the Hashemite royal rule in Iraq and expresses reservations regarding any future developments.

Regarding the conflict over the Hashemite throne among King Husayn, Prince 'Ali Bin-Husayn, who lives in London, and 'Adil Bin-Muhammad al-Hashimi, 'Abd-al-Razzaq says that 'Ali Bin-Husayn can present himself as the legitimate heir to the Hashemite throne in Iraq. He does not see eye to eye with King Husayn.

He says that the question of the Hashemites return to power in Iraq is not fundamental, but it is raised as part of several scenarios involving the return of the Hashemites, Kurdish and Shiite federations, and other scenarios.

He said that the most significant Iraqi event after the second Gulf war was the defection of Husayn Kamil al-Majid, because he represented one of the pillars of Saddam Husayn's regime.

'Abd-al-Razzaq emphasized that the return of the Hashemites will provoke neighboring countries that have no interest in this. He thinks that King Husayn understands this situation and is content with his aspirations, but he is not making any serious efforts in this regard because circumstances do not permit the achievement of his aspirations.

Ibrahim al-Dusuqi Shatta: Hashemism Does Not Give Legitimacy to the Rule, and Partition Is Being Suggested

Ibrahim al-Dusuqi Shatta, professor of history at Cairo University, asked: Who are the Hashemites? Answering his own question, he said:

"If you look for them, you will find many people in the Islamic World who claim to be Hashemites. If some of them can prove their relationship, does this give them the legitimacy to rule? No one accepts the idea that because the Hashemites ruled Iraq following World War I, as a result of political plans by known powers, they should rule it now. In whose interest do they want to play the same role again? What succeeded in 1914 will not necessarily succeed at the end of the century. Being a Hashemite does not give a person legitimacy to rule any Islamic country."

Shatta thinks that the idea is being raised as part of an attempt to restore monarchies in the world, just as the idea is raised for the return of the dynasty of Muhammad 'Ali to power in Egypt and the return of the al-Sanusi dynasty to power in Libya.

He noted that the people who suggested this scenario ignored a decisive factor, which is the hegemony of the

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military establishment. Therefore, the only solution will be to "impose" this scenario.

He added: "I suspect that the scenario suggested by political developments is partition because the major entities in the Islamic and Arab worlds are being divided into smaller entities. Iraq might be divided into three states: a Kurdish state, a Shiite state, and a Sunni state."

Shatta said: The Hashemites cannot control the conflicting elements in Iraq. They cannot impose a regime acceptable to the three main forces: the Shiites, the Sunnis, and the Kurds.

He noted the tribal implications in any suggested scenario, explaining that the tribes have no loyalty to the Hashemites.

Shatta denied that the Iraqi opposition abroad supported the partition scenario because it does not have any military power to play a role.

Walid Qudhayhah: The Solution Lies in Syria and Not in Jordan

Walid Qudhayhah, professor of political science at the American University of Cairo and a leader of the Arab nationalist movement at the end of the fifties and the beginning of the sixties, told us that "some Iraqi opposition forces and leaders, particularly those who were associated with the royal regime before the July 1958 revolution, have suggested the restoration of the Hashemite rule. Some Jordanian figures close to the Jordanian king have also shyly suggested it. They alluded to this issue without making explicit statements about it."

Qudhayhah ruled out this scenario, saying: When we look at the Arab arena, we find influential forces and states in the area. These principal states do not favor a Hashemite solution in Baghdad. A Hashemite presence will upset the balance of power in favor of Iraq and Jordan and against Syria. Egypt will view this solution as a major threat to its leading role.

Which forces support this scenario? A small part of the Iraqi opposition and Husayn Kamil, by virtue of his presence in the Jordanian capital, support it. No other influential forces, including the Kurds, support it.

The non-Arab forces around Iraq, like Turkey and Iran, do not support such a solution. Qudhayhah added: The Americans do not aspire for a Hashemite presence in Baghdad. They like the present situation, because it serves their national interests. Israel also prefers the situation to remain as it is.

Asked about U.S. President Bill Clinton's desire to resolve the Iraqi problem so he can use it as a card in the coming presidential election campaign, Qudhayhah denied that this factor will have any influence. He pointed out that U.S. foreign policy does not influence the American voter, apart from what affects Israel, because of the strong Zionist lobby in the United States. What primarily influences the American voter are the economy and domestic issues.

Qudhayhah affirmed that the unstable situation in Iraq gives Israel the assurance that Iraq cannot pose any threat to it. He noted that stability is a relative matter. For the West, the situation is stable, but it is unstable for the Iraqi people. Stability, from the U.S. perspective, is the ability to control and contain the situation in Iraq.

Asked what alternative scenarios exist, he said: The United States has no genuine desire to overthrow Saddam. Baker's memoirs confirm that Bush had no intention to topple the Baghdad regime.

Qudhayhah suggested another scenario, which is a coup from within the regime. He added: Such a coup must take place by Tikriti Ba'thists from within the regime because they are the only power that controls the army, the party, and remaining state institutions. Their ally in such a coup will be Syria.

He affirmed that if such a scenario succeeds, it will create a new situation in the area. If Syria gets involved, it could solve the Kurdish problem, because Syria controls a large Kurdish population. Iran will accept this solution by virtue of its good relations with Syria. They will deal with the new regime as an ally or a friendly power.

Returning to the Hashemite issue, Qudhayhah denied that Husayn Kamil al-Majid's defection had any connection with any scenario. He said: "This event showed one thing: that King Husayn had miscalculated in playing this game. He thought that by adopting such a position, the Gulf states would rush to supply him with oil and he can dispense with Iraqi oil. This did not happen. He was forced later to send his trade minister to Iraq to restore normal supply."

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Israel: Baraq—Operation 'Must Ensure' End of Katyusha Attacks

TA2404101796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq says Operation Grapes of Wrath must ensure the end of the katyusha attacks against the Galilee settlements. The understandings must be renewed and even upgraded and written down. Minister Baraq hopes it will be possible to attain these goals, otherwise the government will have to consider its moves while pursuing the military activity.

Asked by our correspondent Yitzhaq Feller whether there are signs that President al-Asad is willing to reach an agreement, Minister Baraq said he has been following the Syrian president for many years and from his experience it is impossible to guess what he will do. He said we will have to wait and see what al-Asad does.

Israel: Peres Comments on Lebanon Operation, Iran, Hebron Pullout

TA2304180896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1510 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Summary] This 35-minute interview with Shim'on Peres, Israeli prime minister and defense minister, was conducted by political correspondent Shlomo Raz and army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe; it was recorded earlier in the day at the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem.

Asked whether a cease-fire in Lebanon could be attained within the next few hours, he says: "No. In my opinion, if we reach an accord, it will take at least two to three days." He goes on to say that he believes "there will be a written document" formulated in legal terms.

Asked to confirm that special forces are operating in Lebanon, as indicated by the incident in Qana, the prime minister says: "The answer is yes, but to put it better I would say that their operations are aimed at preventing katyusha attacks in those places from which katyushas are fired."

Asked to comment on foreign reports that there are contingency plans to strike at Iran if Israeli or Jewish targets abroad are hit, Peres says: "I find it hard to believe that those reporters had access to Israeli drawing boards. I do not know what happens on all drawing boards. There are probably 1,000 plans on the drawing boards. I do not know about any such specific plan." To the question of whether Israel would consider a preemptive strike, he says: "Nobody says that Iran already has a nuclear option, everybody says that it is striving for it. Actions are taken, such as in the meeting between Clinton and Yeltsin, where this was one of the key issues." Asked whether the action concerning the Iraqi reactor could be repeated if Iran proved to possess nuclear capability, the prime minister says: "When this issue transpires you will ask me this question, and I am sure that then I will give you an answer."

To the question of whether Yasir 'Arafat will abide by his commitment to repeal those clauses in the Palestinian Charter calling for Israel's destruction, the prime minister replies: "The speech he delivered to the Palestine National Council [PNC] yesterday — not all of it — indeed included some courageous passages. As for the charter, he has been faithful to the agreement and I hope that the PNC will indeed abide by it, although I know that there are many skeptics in our midst."

Asked to comment on whether the redeployment in Hebron will take place before the elections, Peres says: "I will reply to this question when I have a proper answer. We are weighing the situation according to different criteria, such as what will happen if we pull out of Hebron with terror in Lebanon, what will happen with Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] [as heard] in Lebanon, what is the ability and will displayed by the Palestinian Authority. There are a variety of considerations." He adds that "the issue of Hebron has not yet been finalized, although our commitment remains." As to whether a redeployment depends on the amendment of the charter, he says: "I do not want to elaborate on all the conditions."

Israel: Katyushas Cause No Damage; Air Force Attack Reported

TA2404052296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Several katyusha rockets landed in the Galilee Panhandle a short time ago. There were no injuries and no damage was caused. This is reported by our correspondent Ilan Ro'e.

Israel Air Force planes and helicopters last night attacked terrorist targets in Ma'rub al-Mansurah, al-Qulaylah, Khirbat Silm, Kafra, Kafr Tibnit, Majdal Silm, and Zibqin. The pilots reported accurate hits.

Israel: More Katyushas Land in Galilee; Air Force Activity Reported

TA2404111896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] We have just received a report on another katyusha salvo landing in western Galilee. Our correspondent Ya'el Ayalon reports that nobody was injured and only slight damage was caused.

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Our monitor Mikha'el Gurdus reports that Israel Air Force planes started attacking targets in 11 villages in the western and central sectors. Among other things, a bridge was destroyed in the Tyre area. Israeli navy gunboats directed dozens of shells at the bridge on the coastal road north of Sidon [as heard].

Israel: Shahaq Interviewed on Military Operation, Qana

TA2304140196 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV (HAG supplement) in Hebrew 23 Apr 96 pp 2-3

[Interview with Israeli Chief of Staff Amnon Shahaq by 'Ofer Shelah and Yosi Levi in Tel Aviv "a day after the Qana disaster"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [MA'ARIV] A week after the start of Operation Grapes of Wrath, how do you assess the progress in terms of achieving its goals?

[Shahaq] We are constantly forgetting our opening position. This operation was launched because Hizballah created a situation in which life in the Galilee was made impossible. Various attempts were made to change Hizballah's behavior, and only when it became apparent that everything else had failed was it decided to launch the operation.

The main objective of the operation is to bring Hizballah to the realization that the path it has taken so far cannot go on and that it cannot fire at us whenever it wants. This was the situation that brought about the operation. Since we launched the operation, we should now see how we can achieve the best results, because it is clear that such an operation is not launched every other day.

[MA'ARIV] Can you define any minimal result that would satisfy Israel?

[Shahaq] In the Israeli reality, defining minimal results is the most certain way of making all possible mistakes. Obviously we have conditions without which there will be no agreement. We can, however, also live without an agreement.

[MA'ARIV] To what extent will the Qana incident influence our goals?

[Shahaq] Considering the present international situation, it will certainly have an impact. No matter what happens, however, we cannot stop fighting Hizballah; nor are we are going to.

You must understand that we cannot check the basement of every house. On Thursday the entire world saw horrible pictures from al-Nabatiyah. In that incident, terrorists fired at an Israeli position and escaped to a house in the town — which is almost completely empty. They continued firing from the house and within minutes an Israeli helicopter arrived and fired a missile. Only after the fact did we learn that a family was hiding in the basement, and the pictures are horrible. We cannot place a camera in every house, however.

Hizballah has no camps or positions. They operate from civilian houses. This is why we tried to bring about a separation between them and the population. For a week we have been telling the population to get out of there, and a large part of them did so. The sad thing is that our demand of the population to evacuate their homes — a demand aimed at preventing civilian casualties — indirectly caused the large number of casualties in Qana, where 600 persons crowded into one building in a UNIFIL [UN Interim Force in Lebanon] camp. Unlike most buildings in Lebanon, this one was not built of stone, and the result was horrible.

[MA'ARIV] What exactly happened in Qana?

[Shahaq] Hizballah fired katyushas and 120-mm mortar shells at our forces. At a certain stage the firing greatly endangered our forces and it was feared there were casualties among them. At that point it became necessary to return fire in order to silence the enemy fire. The only way this could be done was by returning artillery fire.

We knew exactly where they were firing from and that there was a UNIFIL position some 350 meters away. Some 40 rounds were fired and most hit the Hizballah firing area. Several shells overflew their target and landed in the camp itself. It is extremely regrettable that civilians were killed as a result of this firing, but when our forces come under fire we fire back.

We did not know there were civilians there, but we did know it was a UNIFIL position. UNIFIL is not deployed there to permit free firing against us under its auspices. It is no accident that Hizballah directs its fire from around UNIFIL positions, because it knows we will react with extreme caution. The United Nations must understand that either it will prevent the firing or at least interfere with Hizballah fire from the vicinity of its positions, or else its forces must enter shelters. We relayed a message to them to enter the shelters, but they claim the message came three minutes after the shells landed.

[MA'ARIV] It is very possible that following this incident the IDF will have much less time to attain its goals. In what way is this fact influencing your considerations?

[Shahaq] I assume that if this unfortunate incident had not occurred, we would not have faced the diplomatic pressure we currently see. We were willing to stop the operation even in its first days, had we clearly heard from Hizballah or its patrons that our northern

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residents would not have to enter the shelters every time Hizballah feels like sending them there. The moment we attain security and calm — calm in northern Israel and a free hand for the IDF to operate in the security zone — we will be able to cease fire. If this does not happen there will be more incidents, whether we call them Grapes of Wrath or something else.

The IDF is deployed in the security zone and its soldiers must exercise the right of self-defense. It is inconceivable that Hizballah dictates a situation in which somebody shoots or threatens to shoot at us from the vicinity of populated places and we cannot return fire. We will not make concessions over this issue.

[MA'ARIV] Will Israel demand a total end to firing against IDF and SLA [South Lebanese Army] soldiers in the security zone?

[Shahaq] If Hizballah stops operating against us in the security zone, we will stop our operations against it in other places.

[MA'ARIV] Is this an Israeli condition for an agreement?

[Shahaq] I do not know whether this will be a condition and whether Hizballah will accept it. If Hizballah wants to continue fighting, we are ready. It is clear, however, that we cannot accept any restrictions. Hizballah must realize that if it fights us in the security zone we will react everywhere it is located, and if there are civilian casualties it must not be able to retaliate by firing at the Galilee. We could also have demanded that Hizballah disarm or stop fighting completely, but I do not think we can work this arrangement with any party.

[MA'ARIV] Perhaps we can, only not in the near future.

[Shahaq] True. Over the long run we cannot accept a situation wherein there are almost exterritorial enclaves in Lebanon controlled by military militias, and where the Lebanese Army is deployed in the area but does nothing to prevent the firing of katyushas against us. It is true we have already gotten used to this situation in Lebanon, but that does not make it normal.

[MA'ARIV] If Israel ends the operation in some agreement resembling the Operation Accountability understandings, will you consider Operation Grapes of Wrath a failure?

[Shahaq] I am not interested in the understandings, but in what Hizballah will do. Last time we did not have a written document, each side interpreted things differently, and the first katyushas landed three and a half months after the understandings were achieved. If Hizballah stops operating, that will be best. If it continues operating we will have to act against it everywhere. "Everywhere" means not only against those who actually fire on us, but also against the headquarters, communication rooms, and people who are one moment civilians and in the next plant roadside bombs.

[MA'ARIV] Such a concept may lead to a ground operation, and at the present moment it does not look like the political echelon will approve one.

[Shahaq] I am familiar with the people who yearn for ground operations. We have tried this in the past, but there are conflicting opinions regarding the achievements and price paid. This does not mean, however, that we will not use this option in the future.

[MA'ARIV] To what extent has the political echelon stressed its concern about casualties?

[Shahaq] I do not need anybody to emphasize this point, because nobody is responsible for the well-being of the soldiers more than me. The army is charged with defending and fighting, and while the consideration of casualties is not the only one, it exists in every military operation. Risks must be taken on the basis of common sense and logic. We must decide which risks are worthwhile and which are not.

We suffered casualties in the security zone even without ground operations. We have also initiated many operations, most of them ground operations and outside the security zone. Last year there were many more operations of this nature than in the previous year, and there were no casualties. This is one of the considerations, but not the only one.

[MA'ARIV] Have we not encouraged Hizballah to form the impression that Israel is afraid of such operations?

[Shahaq] The other side can think what it wants, and we will do whatever we want. If there is somebody over there who thinks there are some things we will not do under any circumstances, he is sorely mistaken. I am also not convinced what we did so far was what Hizballah hoped we would do.

[MA'ARIV] To what extent has Israel harmed Hizballah's infrastructure?

[Shahaq] Hizballah is not an army but a guerrilla organization, and it has no military infrastructure as we know it.

[MA'ARIV] But it does have headquarters and commanders.

[Shahaq] When a Hizballah commander drives his car from one house to another he is thereby moving the headquarters with him. They have many hiding places

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for katyusha rockets. Many of the places used by Hizballah have been hit, including the homes of activists and commanders. This does not mean we harmed their infrastructure in such a way that it cannot be repaired in a short period. Even now there is no shortage of katyushas in south Lebanon, and if they run short they have people who will bring them more.

[MA'ARIV] Does this mean that in the absence of a political settlement Israel can expect a prolonged war of attrition?

[Shahaq] And what did we have until now? We had a katyusha salvo every two weeks or so, and this amounts to pretty much the same thing. On the contrary, the number of casualties under such a situation could be even greater.

[MA'ARIV] To what extent do the Syrians control Hizballah?

[Shahaq] The Syrians influence Hizballah; they have the ability to influence its activity even in the technical sphere. They can stop the supplies and ammunition from arriving for Hizballah via Damascus airport. They can prevent it from operating, training, and living in Lebanon's al-Biqa'. They can exert influence in more substantive spheres. In the past the Syrians have already acted against Hizballah. The basic question is what is the Syrian interest.

[MA'ARIV] Meanwhile it appears that they are sitting on the sidelines and enjoying the show.

[Shahaq] Indeed, it looks as though the Syrians are not rushing to intervene in the events.

[MA'ARIV] Does Iran have the goal of establishing an umbrella framework of terror organizations, including Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], the Islamic Jihad, and Hizballah, against Israel and coordinating their activity?

[Shahaq] It is more than a goal. Iran is seriously attempting to work out better coordination between the organizations acting with its support — and others as well. Jibril went on a pilgrimage to Iran more than once — not out of religious motives, but because this is where the money comes from. Iran is trying to work out cooperation between all these organizations.

[MA'ARIV] Did you foresee a situation in which dozens of katyushas will fall on the Galilee a week into the operation?

[Shahaq] We foresaw the possibility that the operation would take more than one week — and as long as it goes on, katyushas are likely to continue falling.

[MA'ARIV] Does the uncertainty regarding the time factor — seeing that the operation can end any day or continue for a long time — influence our tactical considerations?

[Shahaq] We have patience. We can continue fighting in the same manner and do other things as well.

[MA'ARIV] Does our civilian population have patience?

[Shahaq] The civilians are paying a heavy price and we are doing everything possible to make things easier for them. Some of them are able to continue living almost completely normal lives, while for others we will have to find other solutions. This will not affect our time considerations.

[MA'ARIV] What you are describing is a prolonged war of attrition. Did we not shoot ourselves in the foot, however, by first of all restraining our reaction, then by launching an operation accompanied by great expectations, only to end up with a war of attrition on our hands?

[Shahaq] The result must give the residents of the north maximum time without any threats. Let me emphasize: without any threats, not just without any firing, because even warnings about firing can completely disrupt life. As long as there is no agreement to this effect, life in the north will be disrupted. I want it to be clear, however, that this will happen on both sides of the border, not only on our side. I also want it to be clear that we will make sure they feel this disruption in their life very well.

[MA'ARIV] Can we do this after Qana as well?

[Shahaq] Certainly.

[MA'ARIV] At the beginning of the operation Israel attacked quality targets, such as Hizballah headquarters in Beirut. Is Israel still trying to hit such targets?

[Shahaq] There are more targets, but most of them are now empty. Hizballah men have left all their regular locations. In any event, we are not dealing here with the headquarters of the Syrian Army general staff or another irreplaceable target such as that.

[MA'ARIV] Were Hizballah commanders, such as Mustafa Harb, whose headquarters was raided, hit?

[Shahaq] He was not, but we did not try to hit anybody in specific. A few dozen Hizballah men were hit, and these apparently included some commanders in the south.

[MA'ARIV] The army exposed this operation to the media in an unprecedented manner.

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[Shahaq] This is reality. You cannot operate in 1996 without giving out information. That way at least we can present the situation as it really is, rather than the way somebody imagined it or would have liked it to be.

[MA'ARIV] The fighting in the north might have repercussions not only there but also on other fronts.

[Shahaq] That is right, and we are prepared for it.

[MA'ARIV] In this respect, are you pleased with the steps 'Arafat has been taking against Hamas?

[Shahaq] I believe the Palestinian Authority [PA] realizes that if it fails to act against Hamas or anybody else engaging in terror in the areas under its control, the situation will be tough for both sides, especially for them. The PA started acting differently after the latest bombings. The only chance of success these actions have is if they are constant and persistent.

[MA'ARIV] We complained that they were taking localized action against Hamas rather than dealing with its infrastructure. Has that changed?

[Shahaq] To the best of my knowledge, yes.

[MA'ARIV] The Organization of the Oppressed of the Earth announced that it would kill Ron Arad, whom it has been holding captive, in response to the events in Lebanon.

[Shahaq] Who are the Oppressed of the Earth? Hizballah by another name. And why do they operate under a different name? Because Hizballah and Iran deny any knowledge or responsibility for Ron Arad's fate. This is an example to the entire world, but we do not need such an example to know with whom we are dealing. We will continue to do all we can to ascertain the whereabouts of Ron Arad and bring him back home.

[MA'ARIV] Which brings us directly to the present and to Independence Day.

[Shahaq] We did not need the recent difficult times to realize that Israel's security problems were not yet over. Today we are not facing a threat to our very existence, but there are other menaces: terror and guerrilla warfare, and their links to demented countries such as Iran or Iraq which might acquire lethal weapons and seek to use them not only against us, thus endangering peace in the region and the world.

These problems are tackled by the soldiers, who protect the population day after day. The number of these warriors, both in the regular army and the reserves, is not that high. Israel owes them a great deal, and I am not sure that it knows how to tell them that. They are the ones who get hurt, and with whose families we stand at attention and bow our heads on Memorial Day, remembering those whom we owe so much. Then we raise our heads up high for Independence Day and see them marching forward and achieving what we want, both in Lebanon and elsewhere.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 0500 GMT on 23 April carries an interview with Gen. Shahaq by Moshe Shlonsky, conducted in Jerusalem on 21 April, in which the chief of staff is asked for an update on the military situation in Lebanon. "At this point, there have been no impressive developments in the activities in the north." Shahaq says "the terrorists continue trying to shell the Galilee, while we continue to disrupt them and raid them. As far as I know, they still have katyushas, which they will go on trying to launch wherever they can, and they have instructions to do so. They are not only shelling Galilee settlements, but also trying to attack IDF and SLA outposts inside the security zone. We know that they are also trying other things, but we are prepared for everything." The chief of staff says that "the war is continuing during the political negotiations. The fighting either continues or stops, there is no intermediate stage."

[Asked whether he is surprised by Hizballah's ongoing ability to fight, Shahaq replies: "We know that Hizballah has hundreds of katyushas. We know that in the past few days Ahmad Jibril's organization supplied it large quantities of katyushas, almost equal to the amount launched over the past 10 days." He adds that "the supply routes from Iran through Damascus to al-Biqa' and from there to south Lebanon are known." Shahaq states that "we will continue to fight Hizballah everywhere." He admits that the IDF did not know that refugees had sought refuge in the UN camp at Qana. "The civilians were gathered under a structure and we did not know about them. Neither do we know about every spot where Hizballah is located. Had we known, we would have hit them everywhere they are. That is a fact of life in war. Terrorists who open fire from such a place are either cynical or cruel because the civilians belong to their own people and they know we will return fire. We must realize with whom we are dealing."]

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Jordan: King, France's de Charette Discuss Lebanon Developments

JN2304205896 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] His Majesty King Husayn today received a phone call from French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette. De Charette informed his majesty on the latest developments related to the efforts to achieve a cease-fire and an agreement between Israel, Syria, and Lebanon. He said he is optimistic that such an agreement can be reached within the next few days.

His Majesty King Husayn thanked De Charette for France's peace efforts. He also briefed him on the outcome of the contacts Jordan is making to achieve peace in Lebanon.

Jordan: Demonstrators in Amman Protest 'Israeli Offensive'

JN2304203396 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 1900 GMT 23 Apr 96

[From the "News at Ten" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Several capitals around the world have condemned the ongoing Israeli offensive over the past 13 days. Protesters have taken to the streets in Arab and other international countries.

In Amman today, hundreds of people joined hands in a call for peace and an end to violence. The protesters, either as independents or representatives of political parties, professional and other unions, urged for an immediate end to the suffering of the Lebanese people. More on today's rally with Lamya' al-Tabba'.

[Begin recording] [Al-Tabba'] What was meant to be a silent demonstration ended up in an emotional cry for help. The rally was organized by the Jordanian Solidarity Committee for Lebanon. Around 2,000 people, some members of student bodies, womens' unions, Islamic societies, and other independent engineers, lawyers, and doctors, gathered at al-Husayni Mosque in downtown Amman for a common cause to protest Israel's 13-day old Grapes of Wrath military operation in Lebanon that has so far killed over 155 innocent civilians.

[Unidentified demonstrator] We are calling for the interference of public opinion, we are calling for the movement towards solidarity and support for the Lebanese people.

[Al-Tabba'] But how effective can such a protest be?

[Demonstrator] Whether it is going to be effective or not I do not really know. But we are here to stand by the Lebanese people against the Israeli aggression, and we want the world to hear our voices here saying that what is happening over there is wrong and should be terminated right away.

[Al-Tabba'] The demonstration is one of many staged over the last few days with plans for more in the upcoming days. Each group held up its own placard suggesting some solutions for the crisis in Lebanon. Some were more extreme than others. One placard was a plea to the world not to forget the plight of the Lebanese people in 1992. While some placards called for the withdrawal of Jordanian diplomats from Israel. To many, the solution was the implementation of a comprehensive peace that is fair and just to all parties concerned.

[Demonstrator] We want peace, a long, lasting peace, and a comprehensive peace based on the implementation of the United Nations' resolutions that have been adopted by the international will.

[Al-Tabba'] Today, political parties, womens' groups, student unions, and various independent organizations have come together in an emotional demonstration to express solidarity with their Lebanese brothers. The message calls for an end to the massacres to go hand in hand with a comprehensive and fair peace settlement for the entire region. [end recording]

Jordan: Editorial—Events in Lebanon 'Discredit Whole Peace Process'

JN2004074796 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 20 Apr 96 p 6

[Editorial: "Shame of the World"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Remember 1982?

In that year, Israel brought terror and destruction to Lebanese cities and villages in a shocking manifestation of the brutality of its war machine and the inhumane nature of its ideologies and leaders.

We thought that such a criminal mentality has become something of the past as peace appeared to start to take root in the region and as the Arabs made it clear that they were willing to forgive Israel its rape of countries and people.

Wrong.

Old habits die hard. An ideology that breaches racism and violence cannot with peace. Israel's thirst for domination, conquer and bullying could not be quenched. Hence is the ugly crime that it committed against hundreds of Lebanese women and children Thursday [18 April], hence is the terror that it is forcing upon a whole people.

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The images that emanated from Lebanon Thursday will survive as a grim reminder of the brutality of the Jewish state and its army. The king of over 100 Lebanese who were seeking shelter at a U.N. base can only be described as state terrorism exercised by Israel as the world, shamingly, stands by, not just unwilling to stop it, but also refusing to condemn it as such.

The Israeli soldiers did not just violate the sanctity of a sovereign state and the sacredness of human life on Thursday, they violated the simplest rules of human civility and the status of the United Nations in which the Lebanese who were murdered by Israel put their faith.

And in the midst of the sadness, outrage and disgust that this ugly crime generated, Israeli politicians came out not to show regret for their act but to assert that their aggression on Lebanon will continue while asking for the continuation of the peace process.

What peace?

Israeli bullets have rendered the peace agreements in the region nothing more than ink on paper. Real peace is one that people believe in, support and cherish. Some people initially felt this way towards peace with Israel. But no more. The Israeli onslaught on Lebanon discredited the whole peace process; people will not believe in peace with aggressors, they will not cherish peace with a country that wants peace for itself only, and inflicts destruction on others.

The suffering that is resulting from the Israeli aggression is falling on the Lebanese only, but the shame is that of the whole world, of humanity. Enough is enough. The world should move and move now to stop this affront to humanity. Israel must be made to silence its guns. No one believes that the international community cannot get this done but the majority know that it is not trying hard enough. At this day and age, to say that this knowledge is shocking is an understatement.

Jordan: Deputy Prime Minister on Ties to Iraq, Stand on Lebanon

JN2304125396 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 23 Apr 96 p 6

[Report by Nivin 'Abd-al-Hadi]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Amman — Dr. 'Abdallah al-Nusur, deputy prime minister and minister of higher education, denied reports that Ziyad al-Qishawi, who is accused of attempting to assassinate Palestinian National Authority Chairman Yasir 'Arafat, is in Jordan. He asserted that there is no record of this person at the Civil Registration Department. Al-Nusur was speaking at the weekly meeting organized by Information Minister Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir. He reiterated previous announcements that the Hamas [Islamic Resistance] Movement absolutely has no presence in Jordan. He added that the fact that there are sympathizers with Hamas, does not mean that the latter has a political or military wing in this country. [passage omitted]

Regarding Jordanian-Iraqi relations, the latest developments concerning the Jordanian students in Iraq, and the latest killing incidents, al-Nusur said: There are up to 4,150 Jordanian students in Iraq. Two days ago, we asked the cultural adviser at the Jordanian Embassy in Baghdad to visit, in cooperation with the Iraqi authorities, all Jordanian students in Iraq to be acquainted with their conditions and to keep us informed. The adviser made the visits. This will help put all students under supervision and make them feel that the embassy is their second home. We are closely watching all developments, because we, as a state, should be aware of any developments in Iraq, especially since we have all noted a remarkable rise in these incidents. This cannot be concealed. Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti recalled our ambassador in Baghdad to discuss all that is related to this issue. Jordanian citizens and students in Iraq should be put under constant observation. We will deal with this issue with the highest degree of responsibility. Nothing is more important to us than the safety of our people. We cannot decide now what educational measures we will have to take in the event these students return home. This is still a hypothetical issue. However, we will deal with the situation wisely and responsibly.

Asked whether Bassam Qaqish, Jordanian ambassador in Iraq, will return or not, al-Nusur added: This is up to the prime minister, who is also the foreign minister, who will give instructions to the ambassador. So, I cannot predict what will happen. All that I can say is that the ambassador was recalled for consultation.

Asked about the students who were killed in Iraq recently, al-Nusur said: Two citizens were killed last week. In addition, five other citizens, including two students, were killed earlier. This brings the number of citizens killed to seven. These are the only cases we are aware of. I am unhappy with the way in which a Jordanian citizen was killed in Baghdad recently. In fact, I am displeased with all the killings. I am not sure that these incidents were not premeditated. Preliminary indications show that the incident was premeditated. This is a deduction which we should verify. The investigations were made by the Iraqi authorities, not us. The details of the case will be disclosed once the investigations are concluded.

Regarding the status of the Iraqi Embassy and reports that it serves as an espionage station, al-Nusur said: It is

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uncommon in politics to raise such an issue. However, we are concerned about this. Any measure or decision in this respect will be made by the concerned minister. We cannot deny that certain Iraqi individuals were led to Iraq through the embassy.

Answering a question on the Jordanian stand on Lebanon, the minister said: Jordan's stand is that we care about Lebanon's stability and full sovereignty over all its land away from any influence. Jordan was the first Arab country to make a public comment on the Lebanese-Israeli issue and the first country to send a high-ranking official to Israel. It was also the first country to dispatch a relief convoy to Lebanon. In addition, his majesty the king held extensive contacts in this regard. What can we do more than this? The Arab League Council convened recently and our minister of state for foreign affairs attended the meeting and gave a speech. He added that the prime minister asked to visit Lebanon, but he was not given the approval [from Lebanon] thus far. As an Arab citizen, member of the House of Representatives, and a former head of the Foreign Affairs Committee, I am not afraid of the shelling of Lebanon as much as I am concerned about Lebanon's future and sovereignty. A wise man once said: Oh, God protect me from my friends. As for my enemies, I can handle them.

Regarding the impact of the Israeli elections on Jordan and the Jordanian-Israeli relations, al-Nusur said: Following the Israeli aggression against Lebanon, Jordan's position was clear: It expressed its concern to the Israelis. We do not interfere in the Israeli elections, because they do not concern us. Israel would not accept such interference. We are ready to receive officials from any Israeli party.

When asked about the Saudi car loaded with weapons which crossed the Jordanian borders, al-Nusur said: Saudi Arabia has never cast doubt on our position, regardless of the status of our relations at any phase. There is no doubt that we do not allow any weapons to cross our borders. Saudi Arabia knows well that we have constant principles and do not allow such actions. Investigations into the incident are still under way. Details will be disclosed once investigations are completed. [passage omitted]

Jordan: Minister Denies Iraqi Ambassador Asked To Leave

JN2404094596 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic 24 Apr 96 pp 1, 17

[Report by Nasir 'Arif]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Information Minister Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir said that the Jordanian Government did not ask Iraqi Ambassador Nuri al-Wayyis to leave, and that if he has already left, it could either be for consultations with his government or his own decision. He said that there are no new developments in this regard.

In a press briefing yesterday after a cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti, the information minister said that al-Kabariti met with the Jordanian ambassador in Baghdad for consultations on the recent incidents involving a number of Jordanian citizens. He said that the prime minister would make the appropriate decision in this regard after consultations with the ambassador are completed.

In response to a question on whether there are contacts between Jordan and Saudi Arabia regarding the car seized by the Saudi security services after it crossed the al-Hadithah border station, Dr. al-Mu'ashshir said that contacts are continuing with Saudi Arabia on this subject and all security issues. He stressed that there is full agreement, cooperation, and coordination between the security services in both countries on various security issues. [passage omitted]

Jordan: King Addresses Senators on Iraqi, Palestinian, Other Issues

JN2304130796 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] His Majesty King Husayn said events in southern Lebanon and the region are both worrying and painful. He added that Jordan did its best to help the Lebanese brothers overcome their ordeal.

Addressing the Senate members upon receiving them in the presence of His Highness Crown Prince Hasan, his majesty said Lebanon is the main victim and the use of force will not lead to any positive result. His majesty expressed Jordan's absolute support for the brothers in Palestine as usual and said Jordan has no ambitions or hidden intentions. His majesty stressed that Jordan will not be a source of ill will for anyone and it refuses to be blamed for other peoples' problems. He said he has a clear conscience about what Jordan has done for Palestine and added that he is pained to hear that Jordan is an object of doubt or suspicion.

His majesty warned of outside attempts against Jordanian targets and of using Jordan as a passageway to neighboring areas. He stressed that Jordan's Arab relations are good and said: We are still worried and very pained by what is taking place in Iraq, which is being fragmented. His majesty also regretted the recent incidents against Jordanian citizens in Iraq. He said the government is taking the appropriate measures in this regard.

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His majesty said he will visit South Africa in the coming few days to get acquainted with its humanitarian experience.

Jordan: Text of King Husayn 23 Apr Speech to Senate

JN2304143896 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 23 Apr 96

[Speech by King Husayn of Jordan during a meeting with members of the Jordanian Senate at the Royal Hashemite Court in Amman on 23 April — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] Respected Brothers, Dear Brothers: In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Praised be God who provided us with such an opportunity, in the past and now, to discuss our affairs, conditions, pains, worries, and hopes as brothers and comrades in the same, long march; and as builders, and you are among them in this council, the King's Council.

Each of you represents Jordan with your struggles and with your ceaseless actions to be worthy of your positions and as inheritors of the Arab awakening and the Arab message, faithful in fulfilling a duty toward the future generations and a duty toward your nation so that each of you, God willing, can set an example. This is what we always seek to achieve, although we always find ourselves far from achieving our sought-after objective in terms of our ambitions and hopes. We seek as hard as we can to reach the objective. Therefore, I am always on the move in a bid to achieve our ambitions and aspirations as dictated by our feeling of duty and responsibility.

We wish this country and the one big family in this country a stable, dignified life. We also want to provide for the future generations all the chances to make progress in the various walks of life and to face challenges with competence and ability. We beseech God Almighty to help us fulfill our duty toward these future generations. We also beseech Him that they will have more chances than we had and that they would enjoy all the beautiful aspects of a life, from which we were deprived.

Praised be God, our efforts were never aimed at achieving instant goals or self-interests. Our efforts always have sought to achieve what is good, with assistance from God Almighty, in a bid to please God and achieve self-satisfaction, hoping in the process that the future generations will judge us favorably.

In this country, we want the individual to enjoy his rights. We want him to enjoy a dignified life in his country and to be aware of the duty he must fulfill within the larger group. We want to set an example for others, both near and far. We want to protect our individual so that he can hold his head high, God willing, and feel dignified on his own land. We want him to be assured about his present and future and proud of his affiliation and of what this country has offered in the past and what it will offer in the future.

Hence, we are focusing on democracy, respect for human rights, work, and perpetual construction. All this should not be linked to one person or a group of persons. Rather, it should be everybody's effort and sacrifice, which means a basis for survival and strength through awareness and contribution to work and construction in every field. We also hope that everybody will do his work in the field of his specialty so that he can give without wasting time in matters that are of no use to the homeland and the march.

The recent events in the region are disturbing to a great extent and painful to the highest degree. If we view Palestine, I can assert once again that I enjoy a peaceful mind, like everybody else, because we, in this country, have given all we could to Palestine and will continue to give as much as possible in support of the brothers, the march, and the option to which they agree under their leadership that they have chosen. The Arab and Islamic worlds, including us, and the rest of the world, have blessed that leadership.

We have no ambitions or intentions different from the clear Arab face. We also adopt a frank, clear position under all circumstances. One day, we were in charge and we sought to regain the entire territory. We did not accept less than that. The kinfolk, the brothers, and the people in charge chose to shoulder their responsibilities directly. We wished them success, we supported them, and we recognized their right to pursue the path that will lead, God willing, to what is good for all of them.

This is our clear, frank position toward our brothers. But we are pained to hear from time to time that we are still an object of accusation and suspicion in one way or another. When we protest to the brothers, they say to us: Bear with me. By God, we have borne enough, and matters have actually reached their extreme limit. Jordan should not be used as a clothes hook for what it has nothing to do with.

Despite all this, we stand on the side of the kinfolk and brothers in Palestine. We support their efforts to resolve their problems within the context of their close-knit family. We will continue to support them as best as we can and under all circumstances. We will continue to meet each and every demand. We will seek each and every opportunity to support them in order to enable them to proceed along the path of achieving their goals and purposes on their national soil, God willing.

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But here, we are a cohesive close-knit family. We cannot allow anybody to undermine this family in anyway. Our country will not cause problems for anybody; it has never done so, nor will it ever do so.

There is another issue of which the brothers are perfectly aware. This country has constantly seen foreign attempts against Jordanian targets, targets inside the country. The country is also meant to be used as a passageway to other destinations. But thanks to the awareness, watchfulness, sense of belonging, and vigilance of this country's men, we have so far aborted many of these plans. We have prevented these intentions from being translated into acts in our arena and anywhere else.

The achievement of just and comprehensive peace in this region is one of our goals and purposes. We believe that it is our right and duty to seek such peace. At the same time, we believe that such peace would give us the chance to try and walk a path different from the paths we previously pursued. We must prepare Jordanian individuals adequately so that they may be strong, God willing, and able to face up to any challenge or danger regardless of the source of that challenge or danger. We believe that Jordanian individuals can do a lot if given the opportunity and allowed to master science and knowledge and achieve intellectual and psychological peace of mind. We are not afraid of anybody in this world. On the contrary, we are capable of creativity. Our story in this country is an example of what the Arabs can achieve with limited resources and an abundance of resolve, faith, and determination, especially since we have led a turbulent life in the course of our efforts to face up to dangers on a continuous basis.

The recent events in Lebanon are painful. We have done our best to halt this bloodshed. Nonetheless, we are not the party that is projecting itself as the protector in Lebanon and which is primarily responsible for things there. If it asked us to give a helping hand in any way whatsoever, we would have responded favorably. We are careful not to interfere in its affairs more than we should in order to spare ourselves an unfavorable reaction even though such an interference would be designed to promote common good and produce a positive result, which we all hope for.

Lebanon and its people are the primary victim. Lebanon is the victim not only now but it has always been a victim. It is regrettable and painful that only a few can say they wish that Lebanon's independence and its people's rights to their territory should be safeguarded, and that we should help them solve their problems. The most difficult thing we had to face in the past and are now facing is to find that there are situations where help is needed in one way or the other, but our duty dictates that we should not intervene much to avoid harming any party. We hope that the efforts under way will achieve the positive results to which we aspire. This does not mean we are not ready to work. We are ready to exert all efforts to ease the plight of our kinfolk and brothers, and so that Lebanon will not be rebuilt, as it is time and again, only to exist for a short period before facing a state of affairs which are not of its own making, and which lead to results as the ones we now see.

I and the entire world know that it is possible to bring about an Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied Lebanese territories in exchange for safeguarding security and stability for that part of the Arab homeland and also for the opposite side.

Unfortunately, the opportunity has not arisen yet to enable us to test the seriousness of the side which makes this proposal concerning this dimension. It is being said that there are no designs on one inch of territory or one cubic meter of water.

Our stand is delicate. We cannot intervene more than this at this stage. However, we are pained at what is taking place. Some say there were provocations. Some of these provocations were the firing of missiles from Lebanese territory during the Sharm al-Shaykh summit, as if this was a reply to the summit and to any endeavor to confront terrorism so that hopes for reaching the result the people here and there wish for are not shattered [as heard]. The situation continued to develop until we reached the present state of affairs.

I frankly believe that the Israeli reaction is the worst recourse to force, and will not lead to any result because peace is attained in hearts and by having people enjoy tranquility; it is not attained through such behavior and actions.

Force is used when the use of force is the only means to remedy a deficiency or weakness on the political level. And, if force is used, it must have specific objectives, not civilians or innocent people. If the issue is that of a conflict or dispute with a certain party, then the issue must be settled with that party, and not with the people, who must not be the victim.

At any rate, we hope that international and other efforts will resolve the situation. There may be certain dimensions of which we are unaware. Maybe things were set in motion again this time — and we in this region saw things set in motion several times before. Maybe the objective is more far reaching than we know. This evil may produce good, God willing, and produce a comprehensive solution, and maintain the journey to finding a comprehensive solution, and, hence, a full and just peace in this region. However, we very frankly

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express our worries about Lebanon, and about the right of all of our Lebanese brothers in their country and on their land. We also hope that their rights will be protected.

Our relations with other Arab countries are, praised be God, good. Relations with sisterly Egypt — the big sister, which hosted the Sharm al-Shaykh summit and which we supported in various conditions and circumstances — are good. There are constant contacts, both on my level and on the level of the brother prime minister. We hope these contacts will serve the Arab nation's interest and the bilateral relations.

Our relations with sisterly Saudi Arabia are good. We had a discussion and dialogue, on more than one occasion recently, with the leadership there. We believe there are good signs of rapprochement so that we can start building a relationship stronger than ever before, and a relationship based on openness regarding every position and at any time. We should not give any party the chance to tamper with or to negatively influence this relationship, which we hope will be based on firm ground and strong foundations, God willing.

Our relations with the brothers in the Gulf are good and excellent. Regarding our relations with the world, there is a great appreciation and respect for this country and a great determination to support it on every level and in every field. God willing, the march will continue.

At the same time, some people talk about peace and the dividends of peace. I personally think it was not possible to do more than what we did so far. But, God willing, we will start feeling the positive returns of this peace for us and for the entire region in terms of providing the opportunities, which we talked about, for our young men and citizens in our country to achieve everything they wish to achieve, God willing, and to realize prosperity and stability on their soil and build, God willing, the model country.

Our relations with the world are good. Regarding Iraq's situation, we are very concerned about Iraq's situation. We are very pained by Iraq's situation. Frankly speaking, we feel that the country has been dismembered, and, consequently, it is threatened, whether from inside or by its neighbors. All that we seek to do is to give the Iraqis a chance to meet, to reach understanding among themselves, to resolve their problems, and to start all over again without causing harm to Iraq more than the harm it has suffered from so far, particularly regarding its sovereignty over all its territories and its people's unity. An atmosphere should be created for an inter-Iraqi dialogue to dress all wounds and pains, and to allow all sides to live in the one homeland so that they will be, as they have always been, our support in the future, God willing, and we will also be so for them.

Regrettably, very painful incidents have recently taken place concerning a number of our young students, and others, in Iraq. We had no choice but to do something about this issue, and to take the necessary measures so that the life of our youths and sons will no longer be jeopardized if this is expected during the coming stage. The issue is currently under discussion by the government and by us. God willing, we will do our duty through all means in this regard. We do not have any ambitions in Iraq. We want to rid Iraq of this situation and return to it to the desired situation. Iraq can be an example of pluralism. It has abundant resources, the Mesopotamia country, the oil country, the water country, the people's country. We can no longer remain silent about its situation; we cannot interfere. We only care about safeguarding the individual's rights and Iraq's territorial integrity. We do not want to see Iraq, God forbid, become a battlefield for the covetous sides. We are not one of the covetous ones, neither now nor in the future. Our position, influence, and credibility, praise be to God, can be used to unite the Iraqis and to hold a meeting and dialogue among them for their good in the future.

On the international level, there is Europe and the United States. Some parties in Europe now act as they used to in the past; they act more independently so that their opinion can be heard more than before. There is also Russia, and the beginning of its reemergence in the arena. There is also China and the Far East. The world has not settled yet. We are in a position in which we can deal with all sides and all these changes with awareness and through all means. God willing, for the first time, I will visit South Africa within the next few days. This country made great achievements in the past, as well as many achievements on the humanitarian level in the near past. We will discuss what we can achieve together, benefiting from their expertise and experience. We will also promote relations with them.

We will attend an international conference which will deal with this subject and with issues related to man, his energies, and potential. God willing, we will be Jordan's representative at this conference.

My brothers, there are no limits to my pride in you and in being a member of this one big family in this country. I am confident that we will surmount all the difficulties and will move forward. I am also convinced that everyone shares in building democracy and in safeguarding it in terms of man's right to express his opinion and become part of the process of building this country. Democracy should not let some harm it with the

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objective of destroying it by misusing it. There are those who are ungrateful and have no faith in this country, its mission, its course of action, and its path. They are constantly trying to damage and distort its image.

However, thanks to the awareness of the overwhelming majority of the people, within the framework of the constitution and the National Charter—which all of you helped to create and formulate—and within the framework of keeping informed of everything, including small details, we will defeat all the enemies. God willing, Jordan's image will always remain a brilliant image, as we always want it to be. Jordan's role is not, and will not be marginalized in this region. God willing, its role will always be great and Jordan will abide by the path of righteousness for the benefit of this nation with God's help.

I thank you very much. If there is any question, or remark on any topic, I am ready. [applause]

Jordan: Ministers, Hamas Reject Claim of Plans To Kill 'Arafat

JN2304112896 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 23 Apr 96 pp 1, 7

[Report by staff reporter P.V. Vivekanand]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—Jordan on Monday [22 April] rejected an assertion by Palestinian National Authority (PNA) officials that a man who allegedly ordered an assassination attempt against President Yasir 'Arafat was based in the Kingdom.

The militant Hamas group, to which the man, identified by the PNA as "Ziyad Qishawi" allegedly belonged, dismissed the PNA charge as theatrics aimed at diverting attention from the self-rule authority's crack down on Hamas activists and discrediting the group.

Minister of Higher Education 'Abdullah al-Nusur and Information Minister Marwan al-Mu'ashshir rejected the PNA allegation.

They reiterated Jordan's commitment not to allow the Kingdom to be used by any extremist group and that the government was as concerned as the PNA itself over the security situation in the Palestinian territories.

Addressing a regular weekly briefing hosted by the minister of information, Dr. al-Nusur said there was no Jordanian named "Ziyad Qishawi."

"We do not have in our records anyone named Ziyad Qishawi," said Dr. al-Nusur.

Dr. al-Mu'ashshir said an extensive scrutiny failed to come with such a person. "Such a name does not exist in our civil status registers," said the minister, adding that "such a man does not exist in Jordan and no Jordanian by that name is living abroad either."

Independent inquiries also failed to establish the existence of anyone named Ziyad Qishawi.

"There are no Hamas leaders present in Jordan," said Dr. al-Nusur, adding that Jordan had "no political differences with the PNA" and that it was illogical and meaningless to suggest that the Kingdom was harbouring anti-PNA elements.

Furthermore, Jordan "is an Arab country which, as a matter of principal and policy, does not have a record of establishing a (terrorist) group or maintaining contacts with any group, whether local or external," said Dr. al-Nusur.

Jordan firmly believes that "those who play with fire will be engulfed in fire" and stays away from engaging itself in clandestine activities or setting up links with extremist groups, he added.

A PNA police official, Colonel Tawfiq Jabr, said in the Gaza Strip on Sunday that an alleged Hamas group ordered to assassinate Mr. 'Arafat during a visit to a cemetery on April 28 had surrendered to the self-rule authorities.

Col. Jabr, head of Palestinian intelligence in southern Gaza, told a press conference that six members of the seven-member group had turned themselves in along with explosives and mines. One of the men, who was identified only as Mu'taz, claimed that he was asked by "Ziyad Qishawi" in Amman three months ago to assassinate Mr. 'Arafat. Mu'taz said his group studied the idea but rejected it and decided to turn themselves in.

The affair was the latest in a series of charges raised by PNA officials, including Mr. 'Arafat himself, that Hamas, which opposes the Palestinian-Israeli autonomy accords and has carried out many anti-Israeli attacks aimed at undermining the agreements, was based in Jordan.

Officials here, obviously seeking not to contribute to triggering a war of words with the PNA, have been playing down the allegations, suggesting that Mr. 'Arafat, finding himself in trouble with opposition groups within the Palestinian territories, could be resorting to diversionary tactics.

Hamas in comments carried by news agencies and in a statement faxed to the Jordan Times on Monday, denied any knowledge of the man named in the latest charge.

"We are not aware of the plot, and we have no links with (the man named by the PNA)," Hamas spokesman in Amman Ibrahim Ghawhah told the Associated Press.

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Mr. Ghawshah also asserted that the "accusations are aimed at covering up the mass arrests and the ugly torture of people in the jails of the Palestinian National Authority."

"This fabricated episode is also aimed at diverting attention away from the meeting of the Palestinian National Council.... to alter clauses in the national charter that stipulate the rights of the Palestinian people on their national soil," Mr. Ghawhah said.

He was referring to a crucial meeting of the PNC in the Gaza Strip Monday to debate revoking sections of the charter that call for Israel's destruction.

In comments also carried by AFP, Mr. Ghawshah said he had not heard the name Ziyad Qishawi "either in Palestine or outside."

He described the alleged assassination plot as a "hoax and a soap opera" concocted by 'Arafat to cover up for his crack down on Hamas followers and the PNC's drive to scrap Palestinian rights."

Mr. 'Arafat is obliged, under commitments he has made to Israel, to delete anti-Israeli clauses from the PLO charter before May 7.

In a statement sent to the Jordan Times, Hamas said it "does not believe in political assassinations and does not use violence to settle" inter-Palestinian disputes.

"The Palestinian people know very well the difference between the republic of Fakhani that 'Arafat is trying to bring to the West Bank and Gaza Strip and the position of Hamas directed against the occupier," said the statement. It was a reference to the hey days of the PLO in Lebanon before the 1982 Israeli invasion forced the organisation out of Lebanon. Mr. 'Arafat had his headquarters in the Fakhani district of Beirut during those days.

The Hamas statement said the PNA's campaigns against Hamas and its political and information presence in neighbouring Arab countries are only meant to discredit the movement and fulfill the dreams of Zionism."

Jordan: AL-HAYAH Correspondent Cleared of Slander Charges

JN2104073596 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 21 Apr 96 pp 1, 7

[Report by Ghalia 'Alul, "special to the JORDAN TIMES"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—Amman's Court of First Instance on Saturday [20 April] acquitted the Jordan correspondent of the London-based AL-HAYAH newspaper, Salamah Ni'mat, and the paper's chief editor Jihad al-Khazin of all charges filed against them by Prosecutor General Jamal al-Zu'bi.

The court found Mr. Ni'mat innocent of slander and libel over an article published in AL-HAYAH on Sept. 21, 1995, alleging that 42 Jordanian journalists, a former cabinet member and businessmen were in the Iraqi government's payroll.

Mr. Ni'mat was also cleared of charges that he violated two articles of the Press and Publications Law.

In his article Mr. Ni'mat quoted "informed and official sources" as saying that after the defection to Jordan of two senior Iraqi officials on Aug. 8, Iraq was attempting to recruit Jordanian journalists and revive all pro-Baghdad forces in the Kingdom by offering gifts to create a rend that runs counter to the official Jordanian position towards Iraq.

Shortly after the article was published, columnist Tariq Masarwah demanded in one of his articles published in AL-RA'Y daily that Mr. Ni'mat, the newspaper and its chief editor be prosecuted.

Mr. al-Zu'bi pressed charges against Mr. Ni'mat accusing him of overlooking objectivity, honesty and accuracy in commenting on news, harming national unity, inciting crime and planting seeds of hatred and division among members of society.

Mr. Ni'mat pleaded innocent to all these charges.

Mr. al-Zu'bi ordered a two-week detention of Mr. Ni'mat on Oct. 3, but the journalist was released on bail on Oct. 5.

In Mr. Ni'mat's trial, which opened mid-December, lawyer Rabi' Hamzah presented his defence witnesses who testified that Mr. Ni'mat's article slandered no particular person as it did not mention any names.

The director of the Press and Publications Department, Muhammad Amin, testified before Judge Tawfiq al-Qaysi that he believed the article did not violate the Press and Publications Law.

He added that had the article violated the law, the department would have confiscated the newspaper before it entered the market.

Another defence witness, 'Abdallah Hasanat, managing editor of the JORDAN TIMES, testified that His Majesty King Husayn had said in a meeting with journalists on May 25, 1993 that some journalists were providing services to foreign countries.

"Those who place their financial interests over those of the country should fear God," Mr. Hasanat quoted the

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King as saying in the meeting, which, he said, addressed the Kingdom's relations with Iraq.

The lawyer also used as evidence an interview the JORDAN TIMES had with former Prime Minister Prince Zayd Bin-Shakir, who said that the government knew that some journalists were on the payroll of foreign countries and are clearly working against the interests of the Kingdom.

In his testimony prosecution witness Sulayman al-Qudah, president of the Jordan Press Association (JPA) said that his organisation had no intention of pressing charges against AL-HAYAH, its correspondent and its chief editor.

Judge al-Qaysi said in his verdict that the court could rule based on suspicions but on clear evidence and that what Mr. Ni'mat had published did not constitute a crime punishable by law.

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Lebanon: Al-Hirawi Addresses UN General Assembly

NC2304205796 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 2006 GMT 23 Apr 96

[Speech by Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi to the extraordinary meeting of the UN General Assembly in New York — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] Mr. President: Lebanon thanks the United Nations for its response to our call. We appreciate the holding of an extraordinary meeting of the General Assembly today to discuss the exacerbating Israeli aggressions against Lebanon. It is an act of devotion to your responsibility toward a homeland being unjustly punished.

Allow us to express our gratitude to you and to his excellency the secretary general for the international organization's activities, which serve humanity and the values of international legitimacy, and for the unique role of strengthening international solidarity it plays, despite the difficult conditions that have emerged.

Mr. President, following Lebanon's victory over the seditious and imposed tribulations that raged on its soil for 17 years, our homeland started to restore itself to its former state as a beacon of freedom, democracy, human progress, and peace. Our internal security was stabilized. The Lebanese Army and the legitimate security forces were deployed in the capital and its environs and started to spread to our steadfast south so as to undertake, alongside the respected UN forces which are commended for their sacrifices, the mission of consolidating the national authority there.

The state started to revive its establishments and departments, to apply law, to tackle the consequences of wars at the national economic, social, educational, and environmental levels, and to combat planting and trafficking in drugs until Lebanon won the whole world's admiration for our achievements in that field.

We came to you in 1991 and made our appeal from your platform: We want our right. We appealed to you to cooperate, after having implemented most of the clauses of the national accord document which the Lebanese unanimously agreed on in al-Ta'if in 1989 and which enjoyed Arab backing and international support, specifically the support of the Security Council's permanent members.

We appealed to you to cooperate with us to implement Security Council Resolution 425, which was included in this document. The resolution stipulated that the state should impose its authority on the south and western al-Biqa' with its own forces. According to this resolution, you sent the UN Interim Force to ensure the withdrawal of Israel forces immediately on the issuance of this resolution — that is in 1978 — to behind our internationally recognized borders.

But Israel was irritated by Lebanon's development, its progress along the road of economic and construction recovery, and its stand on restoring its sovereignty over the parts occupied by Israel in the south and western al-Biqa'. It persisted in practicing daily attacks and invaded the south in 1993. In the past two weeks, it again threw Lebanon into the fire of death and destruction.

We were expecting the world to assist us in developing our construction capabilities. But we come to you today carrying the blood of our innocent citizens, carrying Israel's slaughter of Lebanon's hope that international legitimacy would uphold justice. We come to you today carrying the dignity of a wounded country; all that it is guilty of is not believing in violence and force as a way to deter aggression. Our country has always been a center of cultural illumination, a bridge between East and West. Our capital was the capital of the East, the resort of the East, and the mecca of businessmen and tourists from all parts of the world, coming to see the wonders of its natural, historical, and developmental attractions.

The Lebanese are messengers of construction and peace at home, in Europe, in North and South America, in Asia, Africa, and Australia. Their achievements speak for themselves. They respected the laws of the countries where they lived and they contributed to the progress of their countries. Some of them were renowned achievers in the fields of medicine, engineering, law, science, arts, and literature, and many of them assumed leading positions in many countries.

With what logic is Israel burning such a homeland and killing such a people? How can Israel destroy what this country has achieved in six years, during which it overcame crises and their aftermath? How can the desecration of our peaceful country be justified? Israeli warplanes are daily violating our airspace and Israeli gunboats are violating our territorial water and blockading commercial ships coming to our ports.

How can the world accept the killing of Lebanese citizens with the most fatal of bombs? How can it accept the displacement, coercion, and humiliation of the Lebanese when this same world got together in Sharm al-Shaykh to denounce the bombing of a bus in Israel? How can the Israeli people, whose sons of the Jewish community suffered genocides in Auschwitz, Treblinka, and elsewhere, accept that their state annihilate over 100 women, children, infants, old men, and young men, innocent civilians from Qana, the village that was visited by Jesus and saw his first miracles? They

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sought refuge at the center of the UN forces, fleeing the massacres of shelling and killing and believing that international legitimacy was immune. How can the Israeli people accept their state's destruction of families in al-Nabatiyah and many other villages, the inhabitants of which have nothing to protect themselves with other than patience and belief in God and in Lebanon?

What do you want from Lebanon? Do you want it to be a mass grave that will become a shrine for the world, which will then say "this is what your hands have done," just as the Jewish mass graves testify to what Nazism committed against you 60 years ago? I repeat: What do you want from Lebanon? Do you want it to become a mass grave that will become a shrine for the world, which will then say "this is what your hands have done," just as the Jewish mass graves testify to what Nazism committed against you 60 years ago? Is Lebanon fair game? How can Israel destroy the infrastructure and vital installations? It has destroyed power generation and distribution plants in our country. It has destroyed streets, squares, hospitals, houses, and villages and displaced their inhabitants. It has bombarded antiquity sites that are part of the world's heritage, with the recognition of UNESCO. It has cut off roads between villages of the south and between the south and the rest of the homeland. It has prevented food supplies and medical aid from reaching the needy, injured, and sick. The south has become a scorched earth, regrettably.

Why are the most ferocious kinds of crimes being committed against a country which has always called for peace, a just peace? We hope you will speak about Lebanon as a unique political, economic, and cultural entity in the Middle East. Does Israel want peace with our country without allowing it to progress?

With what logic we are not entitled to adhere to our land and sovereignty and Israel is entitled to possess nuclear weapons and refuse to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty? Does Israel want Lebanon to choose between being destroyed with its people, areas, institutions, capabilities, hopes, and sovereignty or surrendering to its occupation of our land and right to live in dignity.

Israel has shelled us with all kinds of fire. The Lebanese's answer was unity and cohesion in defense of their entity and their sacred right to sovereignty. The international support for Lebanon's cause was an incentive for us to stand fast.

Mr. President: Lebanon participated in the Madrid conference on the basis of the implementation of UN resolutions, above all resolution 425. Before participating in this conference we received a letter of assurance and a pledge from the U.S. Administration that this resolution will be implemented. We participated in the Madrid conference out of solidarity with our Arab brothers, on the basis of the implementation of resolutions 242 and 338 and the land-for-peace principle, and on the basis of Lebanon's commitment to facilitating any international endeavor for a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace in the Middle East.

More than 10 rounds of negotiations were held between Lebanon and Israel without any positive progress being made. Israel inundated these negotiations with maneuvers and frustrations.

Mr. President. How can you accept your organization's implementation of the Security Council resolutions on the Middle East against a state that challenged the international resolutions, but not its implementation of the international resolution on Lebanon? Lebanon has not once committed aggression against Israel, which has continued to challenge this resolution since 1978 through its army's continued occupation of precious parts of our territories and through its continued aggressions.

Mr. President, we did not come to the highest body of the world conscience and to the General Assembly, which is entrusted with implementation of international legitimacy and respect for human rights, to talk and to listen. We did not come to the United Nations to cry or complain, but for all of us to take together a firm and decisive stand against injustice and arbitrariness and against allowing massacres to be perpetrated without restraint. What Israel has perpetrated in Lebanon is a condemnation of conscience and civilization. It is a condemnation of international legitimacy, which the free and civilized world has boasted of establishing to stop wars and aggressions between member states.

Gentlemen, Lebanon is a founder member of the United Nations. It is a founder member of the Arab League. Lebanon was one of the members who formulated the human rights charter. Lebanon has never stood in your organization, and in all forums, other than as the supporter of the liberation of peoples and of the values of democracy, justice, and peace. Lebanon is for just and comprehensive peace. All Lebanon is against the peace of criminality. All Lebanon is for the peace of justice.

The crimes of the Israeli aggression will not make us relinquish a single inch of our right. Rest assured of this. They will not make us retreat from our determination to have just and comprehensive peace. But do these Israeli practices embody its calls for peace? Here I must ask: Is this how we rear the young and future generations

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on the principle of peace? Is this how we prepare the peace of the future?

Mr. President, gentlemen, Lebanon is demanding:

1. Condemnation of Israel and punishment for the crimes it has perpetrated against the Lebanese, against Lebanon's establishments, resources, and sovereignty, and against humanity, especially against humanity. Here I must recall that, beside the martyrs from the Lebanese Army and security forces, the number of victims and martyrs among civilians had reached 175 as of the time I left Lebanon, including 109 killed in the Qana massacre alone. Casualties are in the thousands. The number of injured still being treated in hospitals has exceeded 4,500. The number of those displaced from their lands and houses has risen to 500,000.

2. Immediate implementation of Resolution No 425 for the sake of humanity, justice, and freedom. This means Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories in the south and western al-Biqa' to the internationally recognized border. After that — and I here repeat what I said from this forum in 1991 — our security forces will take over the security mission in those regions. We have always said: Let Israel withdraw, and the Lebanese state will guarantee security in those regions.

3. Approval of the necessary reparation for the disasters and damage inflicted on Lebanon by the Israeli aggressions. Allow me to say, even if only once, that there must be deterrence and justice. Competent Lebanese and other committees are now assessing this damage, which, according to initial estimations, is worth hundreds of millions of U.S. dollars.

Mr. President: We cannot forget to extend, from this forum, our thanks to the brothers and friends for their sympathy and initiatives to support us during this disaster which Israel brought and is still bringing on our country. For 17 years, Lebanon paid the price of the conflicts of others on its territory. Under what logic Lebanon is being forced today to pay the price of the peace of others? I repeat, for 17 years, Lebanon paid the price of the conflicts of others on its territory. Under what logic is Lebanon being forced today to pay the price of the peace of others?

Your organization is being put to the test. Our bleeding people are looking toward you, and so is history and the future. This is a test before world credibility. This is a test: Either defend the world's will for peace or drive the world by the whims of aggression. It is a test for the conscience of the age. Either humanity moves to the 21st century more confident about the role of global legitimacy or, regrettably, it moves to the age of disorder and barbarism, God forbid.

Lebanon is looking forward to building a political age that promotes cooperation toward human refinement on the bases of right, justice, and respect of the right of others to security and prosperity, and on bases that consolidate confidence in the role of the United Nations in strengthening international stability.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen representatives of the member states: Innocent blood was shed in Lebanon. This blood is screaming in every corner of your organization and in the conscience of all peace- and justice-loving states, asking: Where is justice? How small are cries in front of attempts to destroy a homeland and in front of the distress of its oppressed and aggrieved sons. Let politics rise up to what man deserves.

My dear ones: I left Lebanon while church bells were tolling in sadness and mosques were making 'God is great' calls in grief. I reached New York, the headquarters of the United Nations, the defender of the rights of the world, especially for small states. I arrived in New York and saw the statue of liberty, a symbol, like my country, calling on you: Give the right to its owner, give the right to its owner. In the face of despotism we will continue to raise the banner of justice; in the face of the unjust aggression we will continue to hold the torch of justice; in the face of the desecration of the homeland, we will continue to raise the sword of global legitimacy; and in the face of killing we will continue to adhere to our pride and belief in life and man.

Mr. President, Lebanon will not die. It will continue to hold the banner of justice and peace. Thank you.

Lebanon: Birri Returns From Damascus; No News on Cease-Fire Talks

NC2304135596 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1323 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri returned to Beirut a short time ago after holding talks with Syrian officials and French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette. Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri is scheduled to return to Beirut later today. No new information is available on the outcome of ongoing efforts in Damascus to reach a cease-fire.

Speaker Birri and Prime Minister al-Hariri held a third round of talks with Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam this morning following their lengthy meeting yesterday with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, which lasted until midnight. Birri and al-Hariri also met French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette.

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Lebanon: Sources Expect Cease-Fire 'Tonight or Tomorrow Morning'

NC2304150696 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1400 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Beirut, 23 Apr (MENA)—Lebanese circles are guardedly optimistic that a new formula of understanding on a cease-fire is about to be reached and could be announced tonight or tomorrow morning at the latest, in light of intensive contacts between Damascus and Beirut in the past few hours.

Lebanese Government sources say the new formula, which the Syrian leadership has accepted and that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher received last night, creates relative stability providing a broader framework than the July 1993 understanding. These officials have described this formula as an advanced step toward halting Israel's continuing aggression on Lebanon and ending the shelling of civilians in what could be considered a point scored by Lebanon against Israel.

The same officials point out that the Lebanese State will be the main party in the new understanding, thus avoiding the problem of who would sign this understanding. The same officials reveal that during Syrian President al-Asad's talks with Christopher, Syria stressed the need to separate the file of civilians in Lebanese and Israeli areas from that of the existing situation in the occupied border zone, thus ensuring that the Lebanese Resistance operations would not stop before a comprehensive withdrawal of the occupation troops is secured through negotiations.

According to the same officials, Syria has rejected an Israeli request to reduce the friction between the resistance and the Israeli army inside the occupied security zone. Israel had two main requests: Syrian guarantees to halt the firing of katyushas at Upper Galilee and the scaling down of friction between the resistance and Israeli army inside the occupied border belt. The sources point out that during talks with the U.S. delegation the Syrian officials also rejected proposals to shape security and political arrangements with Lebanon without progress on the Syrian-Israeli track and to resume the negotiations without any timetable. In the meantime all Resistance operations would stop.

The final stages of negotiations, which are taking place now in Damascus between the U.S. Secretary of State and French foreign minister involving Damascus, Tel Aviv, and the Lebanese Chamber speaker and prime minister, are focusing on the need for the new understanding to go beyond a cease-fire to include a formula outlining new arrangements that prepare the ground for the start of peace negotiations between Lebanon and Israel soon. [passage omitted]

Lebanon: Al-Hariri Informs U.S. Envoy of Remarks on U.S. Initiative

NC2304173596 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1700 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] AFP has quoted Lebanese official sources saying that Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri today handed U.S. Ambassador in Lebanon Richard Jones a memorandum specifying Lebanon's minimum requirements to accept a cease-fire. The memorandum was prepared by Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri and Rafiq al-Hariri after contacting President Ilyas al-Hirawi, who is in New York.

Prime Minister al-Hariri informed the U.S. ambassador of Lebanon's remarks on the U.S. initiative to reach a cease-fire.

Lebanon: Nasrallah—Hizballah Not To Sign Any Agreement With Israel

NC2304194196 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1912 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Hizballah Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah has announced that his party is not concerned with any talk about a written cease-fire agreement. We will certainly not be a signatory to any written agreement, he said. He stressed that Hizballah's ink and Israel's ink will not meet on the same piece of paper. Nasrallah said there is a need to return to the July agreement with new controls and guarantees preventing the Israeli enemy from renewing its aggression against civilians and from killing children and perpetrating massacres, as happened in this war.

Lebanon: Hizballah Leader Says U.S. 'Cannot Be Mediator'

LD2304183596 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 23 Apr 96

[Interview with Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah, Hizballah secretary general, by unidentified correspondent in Damascus; date not given—recorded; in Arabic with superimposed translation into Persian]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer] Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah, secretary general of the Hizballah revolutionary movement of Lebanon, has stressed: So long as Israel exists, the resistance and the fight will continue. In an interview with a Central News Unit correspondent in Damascus, Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah reviewed the current situation in Lebanon.

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[Correspondent] Your Excellency Nasrallah, the situation in Lebanon these days is very painful. In your view, what will the future be like? And what is the stance of the resistance forces?

[Nasrallah] Naturally, the reason for all the recent problems is the aggressive nature of the Zionist regime, which is based on savage behavior and aggression. We cannot keep quiet about the aggression, or have faith in forums which have always remained silent in the face of Israel's crimes. Therefore, our stance is one of continuing the resistance and fighting the Zionists.

[Correspondent] In your view, is America's plan reliable?

[Nasrallah] America is responsible for the Zionist regime's crimes in the region, because the aggressive actions of that regime enjoy America's financial, political, and military support. Bill Clinton has personally accepted responsibility for the acts of aggression of the Zionist regime. Therefore, America cannot be a mediator, because it is itself a party to the crisis. Therefore, logically, the plan put forward by America initially is not acceptable.

[Correspondent] If Israel continues to hinder matters, what will the future be like?

[Nasrallah] We stress that the wishes of the innocent people of Lebanon should be fulfilled. That is, Israel's attacks and acts of aggression and also the naval blockade should cease and the necessary guarantees should be given. Of course, the occupation forces in southern Lebanon will never be safe from the attacks of the resistance forces, even if a cease-fire comes into effect in the current crisis. Because this is a matter of occupation, a separate issue.

[Correspondent] What do you mean by guarantee? And how would that guarantee come about?

[Nasrallah] We believe that Israel, as a regime which has always trampled on international and regional agreements, could never give a guarantee. That guarantee should come from people other than the Zionist regime. The guarantee should rely on the fact that if Israel were to resume its aggression, those governments and those countries would take a stand against it and deal with it.

Lebanon: Hizballah's Qasim Views U.S., French Peace Plans

LD2304183896 Paris LCI Television in French 1648 GMT 23 Apr 96

[Interview with Shaykh Na'im Qasim, Hizballah deputy secretary general, by Manuel St. Paul in the Southern Suburb; date not given — recorded; Qasim speaks in Arabic with superimposed translation into French]

[FBIS Translated Text] [St. Paul] Shaykh Na'im Qasim, you are the deputy secretary general of Hizballah, that is to say Hizballah's second in command. Secretary General Shaykh Nasrallah is at this moment in Damascus; can you tell me how the talks are going?

[Qasim] The talks are complicated because of the Americans, who are proposing an unbalanced plan which is favorable to the Israelis. Their plan is to make the aggression against Lebanon bear fruit by putting an end to the resistance, and by giving Israel a dominant position which will allow them to control the political situation in Lebanon. However, because of Israel's losses and the huge massacres it has committed, the U.S. plan is not feasible. For our part, we demand the application of the July 1993 accords with guarantees which ensure the security of civilians. In exchange for the end of the massacres, there will be no further katyusha attacks on occupied Palestine.

[St. Paul] The cease-fire — when will it happen, and what goodwill gesture are you ready to make to take the talks forward?

[Qasim] We cannot determine the precise date until Israel's aggression ends, and I regret this. We consider that the July accord accompanied by adequate guarantees is the only solution. The talks could reach an outcome soon because of the proximity of the Israeli elections and the fiasco of the military operations against the resistance. I sincerely believe that a solution is close.

[St. Paul] Do you sense a diplomatic rivalry between France and the United States?

[Qasim] There are two competing plans, that is to say two wills, to play a role in the region. We are not against a French influence, but we are opposed to a U.S. influence, which in our view is hostile. The French proposal is fairer than the U.S. one. It opens a debate and it puts limits on the Israeli ambitions, but it needs to be worked out in detail. In any case, we think that the Americans are hostile toward the success of the French initiative.

[St. Paul] Is Iran encouraging you to continue the fighting?

[Qasim] We believe in the justice of our cause and we do not need anyone to accomplish our duty. However, it is true that Iran approves of and supports our right to liberate our country. Iran considers that the Lebanese people have the right to defend themselves, and it says so. The presence in Damascus of Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati is a support to

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the Lebanese people in its right to resistance against Israel. There are several countries which support our viewpoint. Syria supports us, and I think that France also understands our right to resistance.

[St. Paul] Do you call for the destruction of the State of Israel?

[Qasim] The Israeli entity is artificial. Only the Jews who originated in Palestine form part of the region and have the right to live with the Palestinians. However, as for the entity which is imposing itself today, we cannot accept it, even in the future. The right of the Palestinians to their land is inalienable, even if the international will leans in the other direction.

[St. Paul] How many combatants have you lost in the war in southern Lebanon?

[Qasim] During the 12 days of fighting, we have lost seven of our mujahidin brothers — seven fighters of God — but we also consider that all the Lebanese, all the civilians who have died in this war, are our people.

Lebanon: Buwayz Views Aim of Israeli Operation, Peace Talks

NC2404063796 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 24 Apr 96

[Interview with Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz by Salim Salim; place and date not given—live or recorded]

[Salim] Leveling accusations and determining the party responsible for the death of more than 100 Lebanese in the Qana disaster [words indistinct] U.S. Administration officials yesterday evening also. As you know, the U.S. Administration accuses Hizballah of using civilian areas to shell Israel and of using Lebanese civilians as a defense line. What do you think of these U.S. charges?

[Buwayz] I would like to reiterate that this operation has nothing to do with a military response or a reprisal. It is a programmed, deliberate military operation that Mr. Peres carried out for domestic electioneering considerations because the military and the Likud have been outbidding him.

To prove this: Israel provoked civilians by shelling a building in which it killed two civilians but there was no retaliation. One week later, two Lebanese citizens were killed by an explosive charge and there was no retaliation. Despite all this, the military operation was launched.

Obviously, this operation aims to achieve a victory before the Israeli elections to improve Peres' situation in these elections. These are Israel's intentions. I believe that despite the Israeli media's superiority, we must not forget this obvious fact, and fall victim to the propaganda that took place in the early days. We thank God that the situation has begun to improve toward learning the facts, even though at a high cost, after the Qana massacre.

[Salim] A U.S. Administration source said an end to the clashes might be imminent and that Lebanese-Israeli peace talks might be resumed after finding a solution to the current crisis. What is your comment?

[Buwayz] Of course we do not object to peace talks with Israel, but I believe that this is premature. What is immediately required is a cease-fire, the return of the refugees to their villages and areas, and the withdrawal of the Israeli forces that entered recently.

Then talks based on Resolution 425 would begin, in order to implement this resolution. We cannot at present discuss political solutions, under pressure from the Israeli guns, air force, and navy. We cannot engage in discussions as long as there are 200,000 Lebanese being held hostage in the south of the country, lacking supplies, medicine, and hospitalization facilities.

There is a humanitarian problem that comes first and has priority over any political issue. Solutions should come afterward.

[Salim] What did the president's visit to the United Nations achieve?

[Buwayz] I believe it was necessary for the president to explain the magnitude of Lebanon's tragedy and suffering at the highest international podium. Although we are aware of the disorder that has indeed inflicted the United Nations, we still believe we should consolidate the work to restore the role of this organization as an organization guaranteeing the rights and sovereignty of nations. Proceeding from this position, the president spoke before the General Assembly today, explaining the Lebanese matter. For the same reason, he will tomorrow respond to President Clinton's invitation to the White House for talks on the Lebanese crisis.

Lebanon: Radio Updates Security Situation in South

NC2304200796 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1915 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The latest Israeli raid targeted Shaqra at 2035 [1735 GMT] today. At around 1915 and 1930, Israeli warplanes raided Majdal Silm and Jubb Suwayd between al-'Izziyah and Majdal Zun.

Israeli warships started a bombardment of the coastal road, especially between al-Rumaylah and al-Awwali, at 2000.

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Bra'shit and al-Jabal al-Aqra' came under concentrated artillery bombardment at 1915.

At 1930, al-Qulaylah came under 175-mm and 155-mm shelling from the Israelis.

Hizballah announced that it detonated an explosive device this afternoon on the 'Aramta-al-Rayhan road under a Lahd forces' [South Lebanese Army] vehicle, killing or wounding those in it. But the Voice of the South, which admitted that there was an explosion, said the explosion targeted a civilian vehicle, injuring three persons.

[Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic at 1925 GMT on 23 April reports "that Israeli warplanes launched, a few minutes ago, two raids on the entrance to (Layl al-Gharbi). This was accompanied by 120-mm artillery bombardment of al-Mansuriyah from the enemy positions in the Tayr Harfa junction."

["The enemy's helicopters are continuing to fly over the western sector at low altitude."]

Lebanon: Israeli Planes Fire Rockets at Villages Near Tyre

NC2304122396 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1200 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli warplanes raided al-Hinniyah village in the Tyre District a short while ago, firing several air- to-surface rockets at residential quarters. Earlier, Israeli warplanes fired several air-to-surface rockets at Majdal Zun also in the Tyre District.

Meanwhile, Israeli warplanes are carrying out low-level flights over the western and central sectors and over the city of Tyre.

Lebanon: Israeli Aircraft Raid Residential Areas in Shaqra

NC2304150996 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1502 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] This just in from the newsdesk: A few moments ago Israeli aircraft raided the town of Shaqra and fired air-to-surface missiles at residential areas.

Lebanon: Israeli Aircraft Said To Intensify Activity Tonight

NC2304201096 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1954 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] This just in from the newsdesk: The villages of the western sector are now coming under Israeli artillery shelling. Enemy planes are raiding al-Qulaylah and Dirdghayya. Lebanese police told AFP that enemy warplanes intensified their raids against the Tyre region tonight. They said that about 51 raids were launched. Security sources estimated that 900 shells fell on the villages and towns of the region. They said the al-Nabatiyah Region was shelled by 155-mm and 175-mm artillery rounds.

Lebanon: Israeli Jets Stage 45 Air Raids on Southern Areas 24 Apr

NC2404052596 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0507 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Just in from the news desk: Enemy aircraft carried out some 45 air strikes against Jwayya, B'al, Ma'rub, Barish, Dirdghayya, Majdal Silm, Dayr Ntar, Bi'r al-Salsil, and al-Sultaniyah between midnight and 0800 [0500 GMT] today. [passage omitted]

The Israeli air raids destroyed eight cars.

The occupation forces are currently bombarding several villages in the central and western sectors with 155-mm artillery. The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent in al-Nabatiyah reports that resistance men attacked the 'Ali al-Tahir position this morning. The same correspondent has just told us that the enemy warplanes carried out two air raids against al-Sultaniyah at 0755.

Lebanon: Israeli Warships Bombard Coastal Areas

NC2404085596 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0831 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Just in from the editor's desk: We have just received a news report that Israeli warships have bombarded the coastal highway between Beirut and the south. According to a security source, the Israeli warships fired 40 rounds this morning at the al-Awwali bridge and the town of al-Sarafand, where the highway that links Sidon with Tyre passes.

At 1115 [0815 GMT], the men of the resistance fired several katyusha rockets at the Israeli settlements in the occupied territory. Prior to the firing of the katyusha rockets, the Israeli forces bombarded the southern suburb of Majdal Silm. The Israeli forces are now pounding the town of al-Sultaniyah with heavy artillery.

Lebanon: Islamic Resistance Warns Settlers; New Raids

NC2304161896 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1445 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] We have just received this report from the newsdesk: New salvos of katyusha rockets were fired at the settlements of Nahariyya and Ma'yan Barukh just after 1600 [1300 GMT]. The

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Islamic Resistance Military Information Office issued a warning to Israeli settlers that the resistance will shell all settlements between the 32.5 and 33 parallel.

At 1730 today Israeli aircraft raided al-Hinniyah and Israeli artillery shelled the region of 'Imran in al-Qulaylah. Earlier there was an Israeli raid on Kafra; it targeted a hospital under construction.

Lebanon: More Katyusha Rockets Fired; Israeli Shelling Reported

NC2404094996 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0922 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Hizballah has fired several volleys of katyusha rockets at northern Israel. The latest one was fired at 1115 [0815 GMT] targeting the (Yaftah) settlement in northern Israel. Earlier, a salvo of rockets was fired at 1106 at the Qiryat Shemona settlement. At 1040, a salvo of katyusha rockets targeted the (Kfayofal). At 1000, Hizballah fired a volley of katyushas at the (al-Bastah) air base and the settlements of (Sa'sa') and ('Ayn Ya'qub).

Meanwhile, Israeli aggressions against the south continued. The Israeli artillery bombarded al-Jabal al-Ahmar, Jibshit, Shukin, the Iqlim al-Tuffah hills, and the town of Srifa in Tyre Province.

Lebanon: Residents Asked To Stay Away From Hizballah Locations

NC2404055496 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0534 GMT 24 Apr 96

[Communique No. 1 "for today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] To the Lebanese citizenry: The Israeli army continues its operations against Hizballah terrorists in south Lebanon and wherever they may be. Therefore, all citizens who are near Hizballah offices, bases, commands, and homes must keep away from them for their own safety. Those southerners who have not yet left their homes must do so immediately. Travel to the south is still prohibited. Anyone who does not comply will be endangering his life, because the Israeli army will continue to strike at every suspicious vehicle. Only traffic to the north is allowed.

Lebanon: Further Warning to Residents of South

NC2404073296 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0652 GMT 24 Apr 96

[Communique No. 2 "for today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] To the Lebanese citizenry: The Israeli army is continuing its operations against Hizballah terrorists in southern Lebanon and anywhere they are operating. Therefore, the Israeli army will strike any means of transport or home it suspects Hizballah is using.

The Israeli army's operations today will cover the following towns and villages: al-Nabatiyah, Jibshit, 'Adshit, Haruf, Shukin, Khirbat Silm, Majdal Silm, Bi'r al-Salasil, Tibnin, al-Sultaniyah, al-Sawwanah, Shaqra, Yatar, Kafra, al-Mansuri, al-Qulaylah, Majdal Zun, al-Hinniyah, Samiyah, Buyut al-Sayyad, Zibqin, and Siddiqin.

The Israeli army repeats its warning to the residents of these villages and towns still in their homes to leave their homes immediately and go away from the area. Anyone who remains in these villages and towns and their surroundings endangers his life at his own risk. He who forewarns is excused.

Lebanon: Citizens Warned Not To Move South; Israeli Navy Operating

NC2404080796 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0740 GMT 24 Apr 96

[Communique No. 3 "for today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli navy has resumed its operations all along Lebanon's coast, including the area between the al-Awwali Bridge in the north and north of the city of Tyre in the al-Qasimiyah Bridge area, to prevent Hizballah terrorists from heading for the south with their vehicles and weapons.

Every suspected means of transport will be hit. Citizens are asked not to head from Beirut southward in the direction of Sidon and Tyre via the al-Awwali and al-Qasimiyah bridges. Everyone who leaves for the south will be risking his life. Travel toward the north is allowed.

Lebanon: Voice of the South Warns Citizens To Leave Named Towns

NC2404103696 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 1003 GMT 24 Apr 96

[Communique No. 4 "for today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] To the Lebanese citizens: The Israeli army is continuing its operations against Hizballah terrorists in southern Lebanon and anywhere else they are operating. In this context, the Israeli army will strike any means of transport or home suspected of being used by Hizballah.

The Israeli army's operations today will cover the following towns and villages: Kafr Dunin, Tayr Zibna, Dayr Antar, Qalawayh, Barish, Bayt Lahya, Dib'al, Ma'rub, Dirdghayya, Janta, Dayr Qanun al-Nahr, Tura, al-'Abbasiyah, and Ma'rakah.

The Israeli army repeats its warning to the residents of these villages and towns who are still in their homes to leave them immediately and leave the area. Anyone who remains in these villages and towns and their surroundings will endanger his life at his own risk. He who forewarns is excused.

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Syria: Christopher's Arrival in Damascus Reported

JN2304165096 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher arrived in Damascus today. He was received at Damascus International Airport by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', Syrian Ambassador in Washington Walid al-Mu'allim, U.S. Ambassador in Damascus Christopher Ross, and the embassy staff. [passage omitted]

Syria: Al-Asad Reportedly 'Not Prepared' To Meet Christopher

NC2304164096 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1630 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, 23 Apr (MENA) — Diplomatic sources in Damascus have stated that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has been unable to meet Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad to continue the efforts to stop the Israeli aggression against Lebanon.

The sources said that Christopher has been informed that President al-Asad is not prepared to meet him. The sources noted that Christopher will leave the Syrian capital tonight.

Syria: Christopher Departs 'Without Meeting' al-Asad

JN2304155096 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1500 GMT 23 Apr 96

[Report by Thana' al-Imam in Damascus]

[FBIS Translated Text] It seems that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher headed for the [Damascus International] Airport for departure without meeting President Hafiz al-Asad, although the report has not yet been confirmed.

High ranking sources confirmed that President al-Asad has not received the U.S. secretary of state up to this hour because of a scheduled appointment with [Pakistani Prime Minister] Benazir Bhutto, who will arrive in Damascus shortly and who will hold a round of talks with President al-Asad, after which the Syrian president will give a dinner banquet in her honor.

The Syrian sources denied that the president's failure to receive Christopher or the departure of the U.S. secretary of state indicates any upset by either side, pointing out that President al-Asad's appointments are normally scheduled in advance.

The Syrian capital today witnessed a torrent of meetings, which are all aimed at achieving a cease-fire. While France escalated its tone and [French Foreign Minister] de Charette asserted that the most important ideas that are being studied today are contained in the French working paper, U.S. sources reaffirmed that the United States has its own initiative.

Syria: Christopher Departs Damascus, Arrives in Israel

JN2304210896 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2015 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher left Damascus today following a short visit to Syria. The U.S. secretary of state arrived in Israel tonight.

Syria: Christopher To Return 24 Apr for Talks With al-Asad

JN2404055496 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0415 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher will arrive in Damascus today for talks with President Hafiz al-Asad on efforts to end the situation created by Israel's aggression against Lebanon.

Christopher arrived in Damascus yesterday en route to Beirut. However, he had to cancel this scheduled visit on the advice of the U.S. Command in Europe, which monitored Israeli military activity in Lebanon's airspace.

Christopher headed for Israel yesterday evening. The U.S. Embassy in Damascus informed the Syrian Foreign Ministry about the change in the secretary's schedule. Christopher earlier held talks with Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' after his arrival in Damascus. The talks centered on Christopher's mission in the region.

Syria: French Foreign Minister de Charette Returns to Damascus

JN2304210296 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2015 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette returned to Damascus today on a visit to Syria.

He was received at Damascus International Airport by Assistant Foreign Minister 'Adnan 'Imran, a number of senior Foreign Ministry officials, the French ambassador in Damascus, and the embassy staff.

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Syria: De Charette Meets With al-Shar', Makes Statements, Departs

JN2304180996 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] An official session of talks was held at the Foreign Ministry this afternoon between Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette. Participating in the talks for the Syrian side was Assistant Foreign Minister 'Adnan 'Imran, while Jean-Claude Cousseran, French ambassador in Damascus, and the delegation accompanying the French minister took part in the talks for the French side.

The two sides discussed the continuation of the Israeli aggression on Lebanon and the efforts being exerted to end this aggression. Herve de Charette said he expects progress to be made on the discussion over Lebanon and that now is not a convenient time for any sort of a declaration of a cease-fire.

Following his meeting with Faruq al-Shar' today, de Charette told reporters the discussions revolved around guaranteeing any future agreement which, he said, is a very important matter. He added: We also discussed the future of the peace process on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks.

De Charette denied that France suggested the deployment of multinational forces in southern Lebanon. He said that what he suggested was the formation of an international committee to ensure the proper implementation of any future agreement. De Charette left Damascus this afternoon at the conclusion of a visit to the Syrian Arab Republic.

Syria: Iran's Velayati—U.S. Trying To Modify Peace Plan

LD2304160196 Tehran IRNA in English 1547 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Damascus, Syria, April 23, IRNA — Iran's Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati arrived here on an official visit Tuesday [23 April]. In an interview with reporters minutes after his arrival here he said that all parties to a US-brokered peace plan, with the exception of Israel, had rejected Washington's peace formula since it was markedly lopsided to serve Zionist interests.

He said the Americans had already come to realize that their formula was not to work, and that therefore they were now trying to modify it in some ways.

Velayati said Israel was bidding for an agreement that it could easily violate whereas the Hizballah was after solid safeguards for a ceasefire. He said Hizballah was not independent of the people of Lebanon, and that the party and the people of Lebanon would defend the territorial integrity of their land.

The Iranian foreign minister said the resistance against the Zionist regime was due to the Zionist occupation of Muslim lands, and that the Zionists would eventually have to vacate occupied lands in response to UN Security Council Resolution number 425. Velayati observed that for the time being there was absolutely no internationally recognized sanctions on the basis of which to prevent Zionist aggressions and their violation of international laws.

Syria: Al-Shar' Confers With Lebanon's Birri, al-Hariri

JN2304180796 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received at 1115 today Nabih Birri, speaker of the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies, and Rafiq al-Hariri, Lebanese prime minister. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'. The conferees discussed the ideas proposed to end the aggression on Lebanon.

Syria: Bhutto Arrives in Damascus, Makes Statements to SANA

JN2304210496 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 23 Apr 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto arrived in Damascus at 1815 today on a visit to the Syrian Arab Republic. Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi was at the head of those who were present at Damascus International Airport to welcome her. [passage omitted]

Following a short rest at the VIP Lounge, the prime minister and Mrs. Bhutto left in an official motorcade to Tishrin Palace, the distinguished guest's place of residence.

In a statement to the SYRIAN ARAB NEWS AGENCY Mrs. Bhutto said: It gives me great pleasure to visit the Syrian Arab Republic—a country that has strong and friendly relations with Pakistan. These relations, she added, date back to many years as both countries played a significant role in being the cradle of human civilization. These relations will be a solid base for further cooperation and friendly relations between the two states.

Mrs. Bhutto added: The Pakistani people take pride in the progress achieved by the fraternal Syrian people

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under the wise leadership of President Hafiz al-Asad. Thanks to the enlightened policy of President Hafiz al-Asad, Syria achieved political stability and economic prosperity. Syria is an important and a leading state in the Middle East. Both Pakistan and Syria are known to follow the custom of exchanging visits at a high level. Today, I come back to this beautiful country with lovely memories of my visit to Damascus in May 1990. Since then, important international developments took place, which—in light of the new world order—call for promoting our bilateral relations and increasing joint action. Therefore, I look forward to exchanging views with President Hafiz al-Asad and Syrian officials on a number of regional and international issues.

Mrs. Bhutto stressed Pakistan's support for Syria in seeking a just and comprehensive peace in the region. She also voiced support for Syria's position which calls for Israel's full withdrawal from the occupied Arab lands in accordance with Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. She said that the Golan is an indivisible part of Syria which Israel illegally annexed and that it should be restored to its rightful owner.

Concluding her statement, Mrs. Bhutto said: The people and government of Pakistan wish to enhance relations with Syria in various fields, particularly in the economic and trade fields.

Syria: Bhutto Says Pakistan 'Sides With' Lebanon Against Israel

JN2404060596 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0415 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and the delegation accompanying her at the People's Palace yesterday evening.

Attending the meeting were Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi, Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Nasir Qaddur, Syrian Charge d'Affaires in Islamabad Muwaffaq Nassar, and Pakistani Ambassador in Damascus Afzal Akbar Khan.

The meeting was followed by a closed session between the president and Mrs. Bhutto. The discussion centered on the situation in the Arab region and East Asia. Mrs. Bhutto said Pakistan sides with Lebanon in the face of the Israeli aggression. She also said Pakistan supports Syria's efforts to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region on the basis of the resolutions of international legitimacy and the return of the Golan and the occupied Lebanese territory to their rightful owners. Mrs. Bhutto added that Pakistan highly appreciates Syria's principled stands and role, under President Hafiz al-Asad.

President Hafiz al-Asad expressed eagerness to enhance the historical and traditional relations between Syria and Pakistan in the interest of the two countries and the Arab and Islamic nations.

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Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Senator Qazi Arrives in Kabul, To Meet President Rabbani

BK2304034996 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 22 Apr 96 p 12

[Report by Zulfiqar Ali]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] PESHAWAR, April 21: Amir Jam'iyat-e-Eslami [JI] [as published] and Senator Qazi Hussain Ahmad arrived in Kabul on Monday to hold talks with Afghan President, Borhanoddi Rabbani and other leaders in order to chalk out a solution to the decade long civil war.

Before his departure to Afghan capital Kabul, Senator Qazi held four hours long meeting with Chief of Hezb-e Eslami Afghanistan, Golboddin Hekmatyar in Jalalabad, the capital of Nangarhar and discussed with him the overall situation in the war-ravaged country.

The JI Amir was invited by the Hezb chief. The invitation was conveyed to the JI leader through JI Professor Mohammad Ibrahim, NWFP [Northwest Frontier Province] President of the JI and Shabir Ahmed General Secretary who visited Jalalabad few days back.

Meanwhile, the Taleban have reportedly categorically rejected the US appeal to release the seven Russian hostages on humanitarian basis. The seven hostages were detained by the Taleban militia in Kandahar last year.

Afghanistan: Taleban Leader Agrees to Kabul Pullback After Iran Talks

LD2404111896 Tehran IRNA in English 0816 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Mashhad, Khorasan Prov., April 24, IRNA — Governor of Herat, Maulavi Yar Mohammad, on Tuesday [23 April] praised Iran's attempts to end the civil war in Afghanistan and its humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people.

Yar Mohammad, one of the Taleban leaders, who arrived here Monday, termed his talks with Iranian officials as satisfactory.

Putting an end to the war in Kabul, as well as issues pertaining to border security and the return of Afghan refugees, were discussed by the two sides, he said, disclosing that some agreement has been reached.

Yar Mohammad said, "we have agreed to pull back our forces from Kabul and have asked the Islamic Republic to continue its mediation talks with different warring groups in the Afghan civil war through the formation of a commission."

"The Taleban favored the establishment of an Islamic government in Afghanistan wherein religious ulema, jihad commanders and heads of tribes play the major role," he said.

Talks were also held on the security of joint borders and it was decided that law enforcement forces of the two sides cooperate with each other to counter any factors causing insecurity.

Turning to Iran's concern over the activities of narcotics smugglers along the border, he said, "we gave assurances to prevent drug trafficking and even ban the cultivation of poppy in our territories."

During the talks, the Afghan delegation informed Iranian officials of their economic needs and called for the resumption of Iran's commercial exchanges in the southwestern provinces of Afghanistan.

Head of the Iranian side in the talks, Majid Nayyeri, said the delegation was informed about Tehran's concern over the war in Kabul and the hardship endured by people in the capital.

Referring to the Taleban's statements that it wanted Islam to prevail in Afghanistan, the group was asked to stop its barrage on Kabul and open the roads to allow foodstuff into the region, Nayyeri reported.

The delegation responded positively to Iran's request and accepted to withdraw its forces from around Kabul to Meydan Shahr and Lowgar.

In turn, they called on Tehran to ask the Afghan Government not to occupy the areas evacuated by the Taleban.

As for the continuation of Iran's mediation efforts to solve the Afghan conflict via the formation of a commission to this end, Nayeri stated that the issue needs further discussion with the Taleban.

Voicing concern over narcotics trafficking at Iran's joint borders with Afghanistan that are under Taleban control, he said the Iranian side submitted documented evidence to the group's representatives and asked them to take major measures in this connection as a means of helping establish friendly ties with the Islamic Republic.

The status of Afghan immigrants and the treatment they get from the Taleban resulting in the escalation of migration to Iran, were among the issues [words indistinct] Nayyeri disclosed, adding that the group was asked to change its conduct.

Taleban leaders were urged to seriously enter into the peace process and stop from insisting that they would not establish peace prior to the capture of Kabul.

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Nayyeri said that though the group had pre-conditions on the outset, they ultimately accepted to join the peace initiative.

Bangladesh

Bangladesh: Editorial Blames India for Impeding Progress of SAARC

BK2304111596 Dhaka DAINIK INQILAB in Bengali 14 Apr 96 p 5

[Editorial: "SAARC: Economic Cooperation"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Naimul Hasan, the new secretary general of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, SAARC, has expressed optimism that the cooperative programs of this forum, particularly in the fields of trade and economic activities, will be further intensified in the next decade. The new SAARC secretary general is currently in Bangladesh on a five-day familiarization tour. Talking to newsmen at the Zia International Airport after his 12 April arrival in Dhaka, he said: SAARC has stepped into its second decade and the coming days are very important to this organization.

This optimism expressed by the SAARC secretary general is quite logical. His statement reflects the expectations of billions of people of this region who want development. It may be said that the foundation of this organization was laid in Dhaka in 1985 with the objective of overall development of the countries in the South Asian region, expanding mutual cooperation and partnership, and further consolidating the base for cordial and friendly relations among them. Bangladesh dreamed of launching this organization and was its main proponent. The SAARC was formed with eight specific objectives in mind. Among others, these objectives include welfare of the people of this region and improving their standard of living, expediting the pace of socioeconomic development and cultural advancement, achieving self-reliance, and increasing cooperation in economic, social, cultural, technical, and scientific fields.

A question may arise regarding the progress made by SAARC in achieving these goals. This question can be easily answered by saying that there has been some progress. This conclusion can be drawn from the simple fact that this organization still continues to exist. But if we go further into the matter, it will be seen that this forum has failed to achieve the amount of progress and success that was expected and desired. There are numerous reasons for this failure. The main cause is the irksome relationship between India, the biggest member of this forum, and her other neighbors. The reason behind this irksome relationship is their disputes and discords with India. All the neighbors of India, including Bangladesh, have differing views on various issues. These bilateral disputes are not being resolved due to the obstinacy, selfishness, and aggressive outlook of India. The mistrust of its neighbors for India continues to remain due to these disputes. Normal development of friendship and cooperation is being impeded due to mutual mistrust and doubt. The other six member countries of the SAARC have been demanding for some time the raising of bilateral issues at the SAARC forum for resolution, but India is opposed to their demand. As a result, implementation of SAARC objectives is being hampered and delayed and we are not getting the expected benefits from this organization. In this context, it is to be judged how much it will be possible to implement the optimism expressed by the new SAARC secretary general or the expectations of the people of this region.

India is active in expanding its control over all the countries of the region in trade and economic sectors. India has an added advantage in these sectors as it is a big and comparatively advanced country. Apart from this advantage, it is also pursuing a protectionist policy. It is expanding the market for its products in different countries of the SAARC region by giving various concessions for exports and also by patronizing smuggling. But, products from these countries are unable to enter India due to the existence of high tariff barriers. The South Asian Preferential Trade Agreement, SAPTA, was signed in 1993 with a view to expanding business and trade among SAARC member countries. India is actively trying to bring the SAPTA totally under its control. Under this arrangement, India is demanding concessions for a large number of its products. On the other hand, India is not willing to give this concession to many exportable items from other member nations which would enable these goods to enter India. Hence, the SAPTA is unable to get the desired results. With a view to intensifying this organization's cooperative programs, particularly in the field of socioeconomic activities, the overall role of India should be considered and measures should be taken accordingly. If this is not done then optimism will only remain optimism.

Bangladesh: Report States BNP Chief 'Critical' of Caretaker Government

BK2404092996 Dhaka THE DAILY STAR in English 17 Apr 96 p 1

[Report by Staff Correspondent]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday demanded that the seventh Jatiya Sangsad [Parliament] elections be held by May.

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"I call upon the Chief Adviser to arrange the elections by May and the Chief Election Commissioner to announce the election schedule immediately," Begum Zia told a huge public meeting at the Manik Mia Avenue in the capital yesterday afternoon.

"They (the Awami League [AL], Jatiya Party [JP] and Jamaat-i-Islami) first wanted polls in May and they thought BNP was afraid of the May schedule. But we told the President that BNP was ready for polls in May," she said while expressing dissatisfaction over the delay in announcing the date of the election.

The former prime minister was critical of the non-party caretaker government and termed arrest of activists of BNP and its front organisations and lodging of false cases against them in its drive for recovery of illegal arms as unnecessary. She also accused it of 'inaction' against "those brandishing arms openly."

"This is not called neutrality. The neutral government must take action against all terrorists and illegal arms possessors irrespective of their party affiliation," the BNP chief said and warned of withdrawing her party's cooperation with the present government "if it failed to act impartially."

BNP organised the public meeting to celebrate "victory of democracy and of the Constitution." Yesterday's meeting was the fourth addressed by Begum Zia since she quit power on March 30.

Thousands of party activists and people from different parts of the city and its adjacent areas attended the meeting. The jubilant party workers were seen carrying banners, festoons, portraits of late president Ziaur Rahman and Begum Zia and 'sheaf of paddy' BNP's election symbol, while approaching the meeting venue chanting slogans. Hundreds of buses and trucks carried people from the distant city areas and surrounding districts.

Chaired by Begum Zia, the meeting was also addressed by leaders Prof. Badruddoza Chowdhury, Abdus Salam Talukdar, Majid ul Haque, Akbar Hossain, Abdullah Al Noman, Mirza Abbas, Fazlur Rahman Patal, new entrants in the party Jamaluddin Ahmed and Anwar Zahid and leaders of BNP's front organisations. Begum Zia's eldest son, Tarek Zia was introduced to the audience. He also delivered a brief speech seeking people's support to her [as published] mother and her party.

In her 26-minute speech, Begum Zia highlighted the development works during her five years in power, castigated her political opponents for "blocking the development process and destroying the national economy in the name of agitation" and urged the people to vote her party in the coming polls to safeguard democracy, independence and sovereignty.

The BNP chairperson said "If returned to power, we will take steps so that elected public representatives run the local government bodies like the Zila Parishad [District Council], and Thana Parishad. [Subdistrict Council]"

In reference to the election manifesto of her party, now being prepared, she said, "We'll give utmost importance on development plans for the womenfolk, the students and the youths."

Commenting on the recent public meetings of her party, Begum Zia claimed that large attendance in those meetings proved that people were with the BNP.

Seeking people's support for her party in the next general elections, she said, "The coming polls are very significant for us."

"Your votes will determine if democracy, independence and sovereignty of the country will exist or not. There is no alternative to BNP for salvaging the economy from the destruction caused by the recent noncooperation programme. The sheaf of paddy is the symbol of welfare, democracy, independence and sovereignty."

She reiterated her allegations that the political opponents of her party were "conspiring to sell out the national independence and sovereignty to their foreign masters." Their recent movement was directed to that end, she alleged.

"There are some people who live and work in this country but deposit money in another country. Keeping such people on this soil, there would be no development of Bangladesh."

Listing development works during the tenure of her government, Begum Zia said, "Bangladesh could be compared with Malaysia, Korea and Singapore if the process of development was allowed to continue interrupted."

As regards her government's steps for the civil servants, the former prime minister claimed that maximum number of officials and employees were promoted and they enjoyed various benefits during her regime. She asked the government servants not to be misled by the "vested quarters." She also thanked them for cooperating with her government in implementing different development programs.

In his speech, BNP vice president Prof. A.Q.M. Badruddoza Chowdhury also demanded the next polls by May 30 and said the people will launch agitation if it is not held by that deadline. He also accused the three parties (AL, JP and Jamaat) of conspiring against polls in

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May. "They have united to combat the BNP as their total strength is less than that of the BNP."

Secretary general of the party, Abdus Salam Talukdar, told the meeting that conspiracy was on to delay holding of the polls to see results of polls in another country.

Demanding the polls in May, Talukdar said, "People will gherao [lay siege of] the office of the Chief Adviser if the elections are delayed in the name of preparing voters' list."

The BNP leader further said, "(If returned to power) we must take action against those government officials who sided with a political party and revolted against a legitimate government."

India

India: 'Over 300' Militants Surrendered in Kashmir This Year

BK2404101396 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, over 300 militants of different outfits have surrendered before the security forces since January this year. According to an official spokesman in Jammu, the surrender-cum-rehabilitation policy of the state government announced last year has evoked good response, and about 800 militants have surrendered so far.

India: Security 'Intensified' for 27 Apr Lok Sabha Elections

BK2404053196 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Electioneering across the country has intensified as the first phase of polling draws nearer. With just over a day left for campaigning, the top leaders of various political parties are on whirlwind tours to woo the voters. The contestants are engaged in door-to-door campaign and street corner meetings. Handbills are visible in plenty; however, banners and cutouts are conspicuous by their absence. Blaring loudspeakers are rarely heard.

The first phase of polling on Saturday [27 April] will cover 150 Lok Sabha seats. It will include all the Lok Sabha constituencies in Assam, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Punjab, Delhi, Andaman and Nicobar islands, Chandigarh, Lakshadeep, and Pondicherry, and 25 seats in Tamil Nadu, 17 in Karnataka, and 21 in Andhra Pradesh. Simultaneously, polling will also be held for the state assemblies of Assam, Haryana, Kerala, and Pondicherry, and bulk of constituencies in Tamil Nadu.

The authorities are busy giving final touches to the arrangements for free, fair, and peaceful polls. In Pondicherry, five companies of the Central Industrial Security Force have been deployed besides two companies of Rapid Action Force in different areas. In Andhra Pradesh, more than 30,000 polling booths have been set up with deployment of 175,000 polling personnel.

The Army has stepped up its efforts to check infiltration in Jammu and Kashmir to ensure that the poll process is not disturbed. The director general of the state police yesterday visited Doda and discussed security, law and order, and election arrangements with the district administration. The Rajaori district magistrate has imposed dawn to dusk curfew in the five-kilometer border belt of the district for a period of two months from today. In Arunachal Pradesh, the poll officials along with polling material have left for the far-flung and inaccessible locations. Security measures have been intensified with the deployment of eight companies of central forces.

India: U.S. Pressure Cited for Faltering Russian Nuclear Deal

BK2404022696 Delhi BUSINESS STANDARD in English 23 Apr 96 p 5

[Article by Jyoti Malhotra]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Russian government appears to be having second thoughts about going ahead with an old agreement on selling two civilian nuclear power plants to India, supposedly under US pressure.

The new-found Russian diffidence could soon take on the full blown dimensions of the controversy surrounding the cryogenic engine deal which arose when Russia backtracked on its commitment to transfer crucial rocket technology to India three years ago.

Moscow now wants to renegotiate the terms of the 1988 agreement on the sale of two nuclear power reactors to New Delhi, under what appears to be sustained US pressure seeking the placement of all Indian civilian nuclear facilities under "fullscope safeguards."

According to Russian sources, Moscow not only wants to renegotiate the approximately Rs [rupees] 15,000 crore [one crore is equal to 10 million] deal in hard currency, but is also seeking reassurances from the department of atomic energy about the fissile material produced from the nuclear power reactors.

"We are now debating whether the fissile material should be taken back to Russia or whether it could remain in India," the Russian sources said.

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Sources in the atomic energy commission confirmed that Moscow was having second thoughts about parts of the 1988 contract, saying, "Everything is very fluid at the moment. Remember, elections are due in Russia in June."

The sources added: "But we believe they will stick to the contract. This is our understanding." Other analysts, however, pointed out how Moscow was forced to invoke the force majeur clause over the cryogenic engine deal with New Delhi and under US pressure cancel important parts of the agreement with India.

"Moscow reiterated till the last minute that they would abide by the deal, but in the end they could not withstand US pressure," one observer pointed out.

He said it would not be unlikely if Russia caved in once again, especially if Russian president Boris Yeltsin's campaign for re-election in June could get the much-needed support from US President Bill Clinton. The analyst pointed to a recent $10 billion aid agreement between the IMF and Moscow, which was expressly supported by Washington, to prop up Yeltsin.

According to the inter-governmental agreement between India and the former Soviet Union signed in 1988 during a visit of former president Mikhail Gorbachev to Delhi, Moscow agreed to construct two Russian nuclear power reactors of 1000 mw each at Koodankulam in Tamil Nadu.

But with political troubles back home soon after, which ultimately led to the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the agreement with India went into cold storage. Both sides began to evince interest over the last couple of years, but it was now India's turn to hold back following the 1993 debacle of the cryogenic engine deal.

Recent talks to revive the project, however, have run into some rough weather following clear US opposition to any Indo-Russian nuclear cooperation, unless New Delhi places all its civilian nuclear facilities under "fullscope safeguards."

India has rejected this condition so far, even while the 1988 agreement accepted that the Koodankulam reactors would be under IAEA safeguards.

US assistant secretary of state Robin Raphel, in a testimony before the US senate foreign relations committee about six months ago, said any resumption of exports of nuclear power reactors to India would be of "concern" to the Clinton administration.

Other United States nuclear analysts have earlier been quoted as saying that if Russia goes ahead with this sale, it could risk civilian nuclear cooperation with the United States.

A nuclear summit in Moscow attended by the G-7 nations over the weekend also concluded a package of measures aimed at improving nuclear safety around the world.

India: Editorial Claims Goal of Clinton's Visit To Bolster Yeltsin

BK2404023096 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 23 Apr 96 p 11

[Editorial: "A Yeltsin Summit"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Despite denials, there is little doubt that the nuclear safety summit in Moscow between the Group of Seven and Russia and Ukraine was primarily aimed at boosting President Boris Yeltsin's prospects in his re-election bid in June. From all visual evidence of the bonhomie between him and President Bill Clinton it would seem that the United States is committed to helping Mr Yeltsin win. In fact, the efforts have been so blatant that Republicans back home have questioned the wisdom of the Clinton administration's decision in putting all the eggs in the Yeltsin basket. The Moscow meeting was the tenth between the two leaders. Mr Clinton probably thinks that with a fair chance of winning the presidential poll in November for a second term in the White House, his success in dealing with Russia would crucially depend upon who walks into the Kremlin in June. Unless Mr Yeltsin has found a credible way for postponement of the presidential election, he will in all probability lose, in spite of a slight improvement in the popularity rating. There is no doubt some opinion poll would be conducted soon to measure the impact of the G-7 summit on Mr Yeltsin's chances in tune. But, in his case, the norm to be applied is provided by the adage: Seeing is believing.

The G-7 need not have travelled to Moscow to discuss nuclear safety. The Russians agree with the West on the subject totally. If the tenth anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster was the occasion, then Kiev would have been a more appropriate venue. To remind all of Chernobyl, Ukraine was invited to the summit, although that country had agreed soon after Soviet disintegration to give up its nuclear weapons and carrier systems. It made no sense that China, the fifth nuclear weapon State, should have been left out. The G-7 members in any case belong to all the US-sponsored regimes aimed at preventing nuclear proliferation and technology needed to ensure the safety of nuclear plants. But China, which has been accused of having caused nuclear technology proliferation to a non-NPT [Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty] member, was allowed to have its way. But then the primary aim was to boost Mr Yeltsin's political prospects against a come-back by the communists.

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To buttress the Russian President against domestic opposition towards NATO expansion eastwards, Mr Clinton and friends listened to Mr Yeltsin's reservations in the matter. His thesis that stationing of nuclear weapons on the soil of non-nuclear States amounts to proliferation will not cut ice with the US whose global nuclear spread is too well known. The Moscow summit has been more of an Yeltsin-safety exercise than one to control nuclear plants from causing disaster.

India: Report States Nation Not To Sign Test Ban Treaty

BK2404024496 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 23 Apr 96 p 10

[Report by "Diplomatic Editor"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India will resist new pressures to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty [CTBT] that may be brought to bear on it following the Moscow G-8 summit call to ban all nuclear explosions by autumn.

Informed sources here said that the fact that there is no unanimity among the five nuclear powers on the CTBT provisions only strengthens India's stand for a time-bound Commitment on total nuclear disarmament.

There has been little progress during informal discussions on the Treaty language after the Conference on Disarmament [CD] adjourned last month in Geneva. With another three weeks to go before it resumes, it is unlikely that any political moves will be made by the United States and others to meet the concerns of the Non-Aligned Nations. This could be done by agreeing to their demand to establish an ad hoc Committee on nuclear disarmament to negotiate this question.

China had refused to sign the CTBT unless peaceful nuclear explosions (PNEs) were allowed, these sources pointed out. It felt that the major nuclear powers had neither abandoned their policy of nuclear deterrence nor stopped the development of outer space weapons. They resorted to "discriminative anti proliferation and arms-control measures, directing the spearhead of arms control at the developing countries."

In Beijing's view the CTBT should not hinder the development and application of science and technology for peaceful purposes. The NTP [Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty] and the Treaty of Tlatelclco contain clear-cut provisions permitting PNEs. As a populous developing country with insufficient per capita energy and minimal resources, China cannot abandon nuclear technology suited to its needs. As regards possible misuse of PNEs, the issue could be resolved by establishing a strict application.

As of now the "Group of 21" neutral and non-aligned states represented in the Disarmament Conference are insisting on an ad hoc Committee and a time-bound programme for total elimination of nuclear weapons. Although a suggestion had been made that the Treaty Preamble itself could incorporate an undertaking to eliminate all nuclear weapons over a period of time, the US maintains its strong opposition to it. It insists that the issue will be discussed by the NPT Review Conference in 1997 and, by that time, the CD participants will be able to report the completion not only of a CTBT but also convention on the cutoff of production of fissile material.

Iran

Iran: Seminar on Chemical Weapons Opens in Tehran

LD2304161896 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The regional seminar on national implementation of the chemical weapons convention opened in Tehran today and was attended by foreign envoys in Tehran and representatives from 16 countries of the Persian Gulf littoral, Central Asia, and members of the Economic Cooperation Organization.

Our correspondent brings you more details:

[Unidentified correspondent] At the opening ceremony of this seminar, Mr. [Kamal] Kharrazi, the Islamic Republic of Iran's permanent representative to the United Nations, said: UN records show that Iran was a victim of chemical weapons attacks on 252 occasions, which harmed approximately 50,000 people and killed a number of them. He said the silence maintained by the international community towards the deployment of chemical weapons by the Iraqi Government during the length of the imposed war, was an important factor in the spread and increased use of these weapons, even in nonresidential areas including in Halabjah.

Mr. Kharrazi stressed: Our nation never retaliated on a tit-for-tat basis because of its belief in lofty Islamic teachings and in spite of the silence maintained by most countries and international forums in the face of the extensive use of chemical weapons against it. It endeavored, on the other hand, to be present at international nuclear disarmament talks to contribute to the preparation of multilateral treaties on disarmament and specially the preparation of the chemical weapons convention. He added: Participation in the disarmament talks is an inseparable part of the Islamic Republic's foreign policy. And Iran, as the greatest victim of chemical weapons

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attacks in the past 50 years, is prepared to cooperate in every way, on an international and regional level, towards the eradication of all weapons of mass destruction, especially chemical weapons. [passage omitted]

Iran: UN Envoy Addresses Chemical Weapons Seminar

LD2404103396 Tehran IRNA in English 0949 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 24, IRNA -- The three-day regional seminar on national implementation of the chemical weapons convention opened here on Tuesday [23 April]. The gathering was attended by representatives of 16 regional states.

Iran's permanent representative to the U.N., Kamal Kharrazi, addressing the session, said that the U.N. has recorded 252 cases of use of chemical weapons against Iran, in the course of the 1980-88 Iraqi-imposed war, in which around 50,000 people were poisoned. Kharrazi added that though Iran is one of the main victims of the chemical weapons, due to its full adherence to Islamic teachings, it never retaliated enemy's chemical bombardments.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is one of the first signatories of the convention, Kharrazi said adding that Iran is unconditionally ready to cooperate in regional and international levels for elimination of all weapons of mass destruction including the chemical weapons.

Iran is one the first signatories to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and has opened its facilities to inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Kharrazi said.

Iran's permanet representative to the U.N. referred to the adverse impact of the mass destruction weapons on stability and security in the region and world. Elimination of such weapons will help nations in their endeavor for greater prosperity and welfare, he added.

Kharrazi said that Iran frimly supports implementation of all rules and regulations of the convention without any discrimination.

The delegations in the session, reviewed the different articles of the convention and announced stance of their respective governments in this regard.

In the second day of the gathering, treatment of those poisoned by chemical weapons will be discussed and a number of officials from Iran's ministry of health and Mostazafan and Janbazan Foundation are to expose their viewpoints in this regard.

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) so far has been signed by 160 countries worldwide.

Iran: Paper Assails 'Subservient' UN Security Council

LD1904224396 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 17 Apr 96 p 2

[Editorial: "Shame on the Security Council"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The 15-member Security Council, the highest body of the United Nations, on Monday [22 April] night met to discuss the deteriorating situation in Lebanon, prompted by Israel's round-the-clock air and artillery raids.

The Zionists made hospitals, electricity plants and many civilian areas targets for their brutal attacks. As a result, a good number of civilians were injured or killed while hundreds of thousands were made homeless.

The Lebanese Ambassador to the U.N. in the opening debate before the Security Council said: "I am here today to ask you ... to take a swift action to stop this Israeli madness..."

He also desperately appealed to the members of the Security Council to condemn Israel and ask the aggressor to implement Resolution No. 425.

It was 1978 when the same World Body's top machinery for the security of the world passed Resolution 425 which called for all Israeli forces to withdraw unconditionally from South Lebanon.

What a reasonable demand was made by the Lebanese ambassador! It was reasonable and very simple: Condemn the aggressor and ask the occupier to vacate usurped land. What happened?

The Security Council, rather than listening to the voice of reason, bowed before the pressure of Israel's equal partner in its criminal machinations, the United States.

The Security Council, after hours of debate, issued no resolution or formal binding statement. It was simply because the U.S., even before the Council met, made it clear that it would veto if Israel was condemned for its crimes against Lebanese civilians and Washington also insisted that no reference should be made to Resolution 425.

The Hizballah and the Lebanese government have no earth-shaking demands. They simply want Israel to vacate their land and let the recently launched reconstruction plans continue.

It was the 1975-90 civil war which devastated once-flourishing Lebanon and it has been only a two-year period in which foreign investment began pouring into the country. It has been only two years that residents of Beirut have enjoyed electricity round-the-clock after

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years of rationing due to power plant damage during the war.

The same electricity supply centers have been made a target of attacks by Israel and Beirut residents have to face power rationing again.

Once more Lebanon is facing a bleak and gloomy future just because of dirty collaboration between the United States and Israel against the oppressed people of a Mediterranean country and the credulity of the world community.

It is really a case of shame on the impotent and subservient Security Council that it could not redress the problems of the Lebanese.

Now which door is to be knocked on by the Lebanese for justice when the highest organization in the world could do nothing? And above all, one should not blame the Lebanese if they take up arms and make U.S. and Israeli interests across the world their target. We hope it won't happen and that the U.S. and Israel come to their senses before the cycle of violence begins once again.

Iran: Tehran—UN Resolution on Lebanon To 'Disgrace' Israel

NC2404071596 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0345 GMT 24 Apr 96

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] Last night the UN General Assembly convened a two-day session to study the situation in Lebanon. After two days of discussion a resolution is to be issued in condemnation of the Zionist crimes in Lebanon and on the cessation of these crimes.

In the first UN General Assembly session, Lebanese Prime Minister Ilyas al-Hirawi [title as heard] delivered a speech condemning the Zionist regime's aggressive acts and called on the United Nations to condemn and punish this regime for the crimes it is perpetrating. Al-Hirawi called for the immediate implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 425 and the payment of compensation for damages inflicted on Lebanon.

UN Security Council Resolution 425 stresses the occupation of southern Lebanon by Zionist forces and calls for the withdrawal of these forces. Nevertheless, the Security Council has not shown any intention to implement the resolution it has passed, nor are the powers supporting the Zionist regime showing any interest in this. Therefore, despite the fact that the continued occupation of southern Lebanon is a blatant violation of the Security Council resolution and international laws, Tel Aviv refuses to withdraw its forces from that area.

Since the occupation of southern Lebanon in 1361 [1982], the presence of the Zionist forces has been the factor for tension and insecurity in Lebanon. By defending its territories, the Lebanese resistance movement is trying to oust the Israeli forces from the country. Underlining the fact that the presence of Zionist forces in Lebanon is the reason for insecurity in the country, the Lebanese Government is trying to gain the support of international forums to oust these forces from its territory.

The UN General Assembly has convened at the request of the Nonaligned Movement's members and in order to defend the Lebanese Government vis-a-vis the Zionist regime and its inhuman crimes. The need for this session emerged from the time when, because of America's stand on defending Israel, the UN Security Council was unable to adopt any decision opposing the Zionist regime's crimes. During the past 13 days, the Security Council placed the Lebanese crisis on its agenda twice. But it was not able to adopt a suitable decision on either occasion.

The members of the Nonaligned Movement are trying to approve a resolution against the Zionist regime and its crimes at the UN General Assembly, where all countries have an equal vote and where the big powers do not have a veto right. Although this resolution will not have the same implementation power as the Security Council resolutions, it will portray the world's opposition to the Zionist regime's crimes in one way or another. This will further disgrace the Zionist regime and will increase public pressure on this regime and its main mentor—America.

Iran: Daily on European Stance Toward Pariah States

LD2404092696 Tehran IRNA in English 0853 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 24, IRNA — A morning daily Wednesday [24 April] commented on European Union meeting at Luxembourg saying, the foreign ministers refused to bow to U.S. pressures on such issues as ties with Cuba, Iran and Libya, to the crisis in Lebanon, where the U.S. wants to act as both the captain of the Zionist team in action, and as a referee.

For Islamic Iran, which supports peace and stability, and is a firm opponent of terrorism in any form, the developments in Europe were encouraging signs, KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL added in its editorial.

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On U.S. opposition to dialoge between Europe and Iran, the editorial stated that Europe has had traditional relations with Iran and the rest of the Muslim world, sharing ideas and benefitting immensely.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran with its independent policy has much to offer to Europe in economy and other fields, at a time when the U.S.-Zionist tentacles are firmly tightening around the energy sources of the Arab world."

Underlining the need to hold dialogue as it is necessary for an orderly world, it said, "we prefer talking, and have been talking in quite clear and unambiguous terms over a host of issues ever since the Islamic revolution gave us an eloquent voice. And if our words were not heeded, it was surely not our fault but the deafening din of the U.S.-Zionist media which made Europeans act erratically at times."

It concluded by suggesting that the EU should act with caution so as not to ruin the atmosphere of understanding, which American proxies are scheming to wreck.

Iran: Projects With Turkmenistan Progressing

NC2304181896 Mashhad KHORASAN in Persian 13 Apr 96 p 12

[Report on an "exclusive" interview with Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati by an unidentified KHORASAN correspondent in Mashhad on 12 April]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tejan Railroad and the protected free trade zone in Sarakhs will be inaugurated on 24 Ordibehesht [14 May] in the presence of ambassadors and heads of the Economic Cooperation Organization [ECO] members.

Foreign Minister Dr. Velayati, in an interview with KHORASAN yesterday, also said: In line with the inauguration of the Iran- Turkmenistan railroad, operations to build the Harirud Dam at Pol-e Khatun will commence on the border of the two countries.

Dr. Velayati said: Based on the latest decisions adopted during this round of talks, the ECO summit session will be held on 15 and 16 May in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.

Our foreign minister added: It was also agreed that the ECO experts' session would be convened on 9 and 10 May and the ECO foreign ministers' session in Turkmenistan on 13 and 14 May. The heads of ECO republics and high-level officials of delegations from various countries are due to arrive in Mashhad for the 14 May inauguration of the Mashhad-Sarakhs Railroad on 13 May. They will then leave for Sarakhs to attend the inauguration of the Mashhad- Sarakhs-Tejan railroad and the protected free trade zone of Sarakhs as well as the commencement of the construction work on the dam.

He added: Following the first round of talks involving the two countries' foreign ministers in Khorasan Governorate, six committees began their work simultaneously on the various programs and projects and will submit their reports in the second round of talks between the foreign ministers.

Dr. Velayati concluded: The high-level delegations of Iran and Turkmenistan are scheduled to inaugurate the border markets in Bajgiran today.

Iran: Radio Criticizes U.S. Stance on Russia-Iran Nuclear Ties

LD2104163096 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1103 GMT 21 Apr 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. President Bill Clinton, at the end of the nuclear safety summit in Moscow yesterday, expressed opposition to cooperation between Iran and Russia on the peaceful deployment of nuclear technology and called for its end. Observers following the summit of the heads of states of seven Western industrial countries in Moscow, believe that Clinton's position — coming after the end of the summit — was a blatant sign of the failure of the White House's policy which is aiming to place obstacles on the way of Iran and Russia's cooperation over the peaceful use of nuclear technology. This is especially so when hours before Clinton's remarks, Russian President Boris Yeltsin exposed the hidden reason behind Clinton's anger. He told reporters at the end of the Moscow nuclear security conference: We did not place this issue on the agenda and we did not discuss it because it is clear to everyone that our current cooperation with Iran is over the delivery of nuclear technology to that country and we intend to continue with this cooperation.

It can indeed be said that the peaceful nature of Iran and Russia's nuclear cooperation has been proven in such a way that even Clinton has had no choice but to admit to it. And in his press conference in Moscow, he came up with a new claim, namely, that Iran should not have access to any kind of nuclear resources, not even in their peaceful form.

This position of the chief of the White House shows that the Americans suffer from a greater weakness of logic than before when faced with world issues. This is because this issue is being raised when, in accordance to all recognized international principles, every country has the right to benefit from the peaceful use

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of nuclear technology for its development and relevant international bodies have been made responsible for supervising this process. Indeed, international agreements have clearly taken into account methods for the transfer of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and ways of helping countries that lack these resources. In this way, it is clear that America's opposition to Iran gaining access to nuclear technology, for peaceful purposes, stems from its hegemonic and illegal tendencies and shows up the patronizing nature of the White House's foreign policy in the international system.

In any case, the renewed emphasis of Moscow's officials that nuclear cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran should continue, has once again, defeated the interventionist policy of America which violates international laws and ignores the inalienable rights of nations to benefit from advanced technology.

Iran: Russia Dismisses Rumors on Tehran's Involvement in Chechnya

LD2304092296 Tehran IRNA in English 0857 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, April 23, IRNA — Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, in a letter to the Russian Duma, said that rumors on Iran's involvement in Chechnya have been masterminded by elements who are trying to create hurdles and discourage the expanding relations between Tehran and Moscow.

Last month, the daily 'IZVESTIYA' published an article claiming that a number of airports in Iran are being used for smuggling arms into Chechnya.

In his letter, the Russian deputy foreign minister said that the matter was pursued by the Russian Embassy in Tehran. It added that the Iranian Foreign Ministry denied the claims, terming them as a conspiracy to undermine the growing ties between Iran and Russia.

Addressed to the Duma speaker, Ivanov's letter made it clear that Iran regarded Chechnya as being part of the Russian Federation and that Tehran supported Russia's territorial integrity.

The Russian Foreign Ministry closely watches the reactions of all countries on Chechen crisis, particularly on President Boris Yeltsin's peace plan, said Ivanov.

Iran: Russian Envoy Welcomes New Rail Link

LD2304125496 Tehran IRNA in English 1145 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 23, IRNA — The Russian government believes that inauguration of the international Sarakhs-Tajan railway will serve to consolidate regional stability and cooperation and to expand mutual trust among the regional nations, said Russian ambassador to Tehran Sergey Tretyakov, here on Tuesday [23 April].

The Sarakhs-Tajan rail track is to formally become operational on May 13, at a ceremony to be attended by a large number of high-ranking foreign officials.

Speaking to IRNA, Tretyakov referred to the importance of the road network in expansion of relations among nations. He said that connection of the Iranian railway to those of Russia, the Central Asian and Caucasian states will help those countries to have closer relations with one another.

On the reduction of trade exchanges between Tehran and Moscow, the Russian ambassador said the two countries have decided to increase their transactions to more than dls. 600 million in the current year.

On impact of the U.S. economic sanctions on Iran-Russia relations, Tretyakov said that U.S. has always been against the expansion of Tehran-Moscow ties but its opposition will get nowhere.

Russia selects its own trade partners and opposition of any other country will have no impact on Moscow's decision.

Iran: Daily Asks Saudis To Clear Up 'Misunderstanding' Over Hajj

LD2404083196 Tehran IRNA in English 0700 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 24, IRNA — To have friendly and closer relations with neighbors without interfering in their internal affairs, along with mutual respect and interest, are the key pillars of the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic, an English-language daily stressed Wednesday [24 April]. Commenting on certain reports aired from Saudi Arabia on the occasion of the haj pilgrimage, 'IRAN NEWS' said that no one in Iran likes to undermine Saudi Arabia's internal security or its regional or international interests.

Iran was never involved in any form of terrorist activity despite the disinformation campaign launched against Iran, it noted, adding that the 17-year history of the Islamic Republic also proved that Iran was with justice, right and equity.

"Iran is a front-line advocator of Islam, asking all Muslims to rise against injustice, oppression and exploitation, irrespective of caste, creed and belief," the daily wrote, saying that while majority of Iranians belong to the Shiite school of Islam, the followers of the Sunni school and the people of other religions enjoy their due rights in the Islamic Republic.

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The country's full support for the Palestinians for the liberation of their homeland, its backing of the Lebanese struggle ... [ellipses as received] to achieve their genuine right to regain their usurped lands in the south and very recently, an all-out assistance to the Bosnians, are crystal clear examples of what Iran believes under the framework of Islam, it underlined.

Stating that Iran-Saudi tension would make the enemies of Islam happy and that Tehran was in no way interested in undermining its accords with Riyadh, it concluded by asking Saudi officials to use diplomatic channels for clearing up any ambiguity or misunderstanding, instead of issuing provocative statements.

Iran: Students Condemn Ankara's Accord With Israel at Turkish Embassy

LD2304190896 Tehran IRNA in English 1859 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 23, IRNA — A large multitude of college students and people started out from the compounds of Tehran University here Tuesday [23 April] shouting slogans in condemnation of the Zionist regime and also denouncing Turkey for its military accord with Israel.

The group stopped in front of the Turkish Embassy here where they shouted revolutionary slogans against the Turkish Government and read a seven-point resolution at which they also denounced U.S. support for terrorism.

They called on Iranian Foreign Ministry to lay emphasis on Iran's global war with the Zionist regime consistent with the policy-line delineated by Imam Khomeyni and by the leader of the Islamic revolution, Ayatollah Khameneii.

The group also addressed themselves to the Organization of Islamic Conference calling on the OIC to hold an extraordinary meeting on the same occasion and instruct members to sever their whatever relations with the Zionist regime.

They also warned the Turkish Government to "take a lesson from ex-president of Egypt Anwar al-Sadat and discontinue dastardly behavior such as collaboration with the Zionists and betrayal of the Muslim world."

Iran: U.S. Trying To 'Sabotage' EU Efforts in Mideast

LD2404132796 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 21 Apr 96 pp 2, 13

["The World Has lost Hope in US, EU Should Adopt Independent Course of Action"—TEHRAN TIMES headline; from the "Opinion" column]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] For eleven consecutive days the Zionist regime has been pounding south Lebanon via air and land raids with full impunity.

With the Israeli attacks on a UN compound, leaving 100 dead and over 100 wounded, it should be clear to every reasonable man that the Zionist regime's atrocities are a clear instance of state terrorism.

Ironically, the US has refused even to condemn Israel for its deadly attacks on refugees in southern Lebanon. State Department spokesman, Glyn Davies, explained that condemnation would "inflame the situation."

State terrorism and attacks on refugees should be condemned in the strongest possible terms. The US claims to be a world leader. If this is so, how is it that it refuses to condemn a clear act of state terrorism? What kind of crime must the Zionist regime commit in order to deserve a condemnation by the USA?

When Iran did not condemn the killing of Yitzhaq Rabin, Washington pressured the European Union to ask Iran to make its stance on the Rabin killing clear. It is now pertinent for the EU to ask the US to make its stance on Israel's acts of terrorism clear.

No documents are necessary to prove Israel's state terrorism. It is a clear story: Israel has occupied Lebanese territory; it has no respect for the UN resolution, rendering it a rogue state; and it pounds civilian areas on the pretext of shelling Hezbollah bases. The USA does not want to even condemn such a flagrant act of terrorism, let alone adopt any measure to stop the carnage.

The world has indeed lost hope in the USA. Fortunately, the European Union has adopted a different course of action in the Middle East, trying to follow an independent Middle Eastern foreign policy.

If the EU wants the Third World on its side during an international crisis, it is time to take serious action in finding an immediate solution to the crisis in the Middle East. The EU should not allow the US to sabotage its efforts in the Middle East. The EU missed a historical opportunity in the Balkans; it should not burn its fingers in the Middle East.

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Iran: Exercises in Tabas Mark Failed U.S. Hostage Rescue Mission

LD2404121396 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] On the anniversary of the failed military attack by the United States in the Tabas desert, a large-scale exercise was carried out this morning in the streets of Tabas by the personnel of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, the Basij and security forces. Our correspondent reports from the Mashhad studio.

[Begin correspondent recording] In the course of the exercise, the remaining burnt parts of American helicopters and aircraft, which crashed in the Tabas desert as a result of a sandstorm, were carried past the public and the Hezbollah people of Tabas chanted such slogans as "Death to America" and "Death to Israel" to convey their revulsion at the conspiracies of global arrogance, led by the United States. They also fiercely condemned the crimes of the Zionists in killing the defenseless people of Lebanon. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Iran: Paper Warns Kurds of U.S. Motives

LD2404104296 Tehran IRNA in English 0840 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 24, IRNA — An English daily Wednesday [24 April] in its editorial recommended that Iraqi Kurdish parties set aside their differences and not allow the U.S. to fish in troubled waters.

'TEHRAN TIMES' was commenting on the recent visit to Iraqi Kurdistan of a U.S. delegation led by Robert Deutsch, saying that Washington intended to intimidate the Kurds to play its tune.

Deutsch was reported by the paper as threatening that the no-fly zone restrictions imposed on northern Iraq would be removed if the Kurds did not cooperate with the U.S.

"What the Kurds should not forget is that the U.S. never imposed the no-fly-zone out of benevolence to or sympathy for the Kurds," stressed the editorial, adding that Washington was only after its own interests to exert pressure on the Baghdad government.

"Besides, the U.S. is trying to use the region to pursue its goals in neighboring countries," it added.

Turning to the silence of the U.S. regarding the deployment of chemical weapons by Iraq and the massacre of thousands of Kurds in the chemical bombing of Halabja, which constituted a flagrant violation of international conventions, the daily wondered why all of a sudden, Washington has become a Kurd sympathizer.

"Undoubtedly, the u.s. is seeking to establish a sphere of influence in northern Iraq in order to pursue its illegitimate interests in the region," it wrote.

Cautioning Kurd leaders that the disintegration of Iraq was not to their interest, the article underlined that the Kurds should not allow the Americans to undermine the territorial integrity of their motherland.

Iran: President Rafsanjani Comments on Majles Elections

LD2404120496 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani met the members of the State Elections headquarters today. [passage omitted]

The president referred to the important role of the Majles in the country's fate. He said: While we are more than ever threatened by the most evil and ruthless power in the world — that is, America — we hope that the Majles would remain, as ever, a strong backbone for the country's officials in the process of speedily traversing the difficult road of construction, the managing of affairs, and advancing the holy goals of the system within the framework of Islamic and revolutionary values and, by maintaining and increasing its cooperation with the government, effectively help in solving the country's problems. [passage omitted]

Iran: Rafsanjani Opposition Leading in Tehran Run-Off

LD2404131896 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 21 Apr 96 pp 1, 13

["New Analysis" item: "JRM Is Leading in Run-Offs From Tehran Constituency"]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] TEHRAN — The results of the run-offs announced late in the evening yesterday confirmed that traditional rightists, headed by Majles Speaker 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri, are gaining a major victory over their rivals, Servants of Construction or the G-6 [Group of Six, Servants of Construction—reformist faction of Iranian officials grouped around President Rafsanjani].

According to late evening results, 21 hopefuls of the JRM [Jame'eh-ye Ruhaniyat-e Mobarez, Militant Clergy Association—former conservative majority in Majles], six from the G-6 and one independent are in the lead.

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Deputy President in charge of Sports Affairs Hassan Ghafuri-Fard fought from the Tehran Constituency as an independent candidate for the fifth term of the Majles.

Former Interior Minister 'Abdollah Nuri is a leading politician among the winners of the G-6 who is now holding 15th place in the list of the future lawmakers.

Observers here believe that it is a clear defeat for the G-6 as they had been propagating that because of similarity in the names of 'Abdollah Nuri's votes were mistakenly given to Nateq-Nuri in the March 8 first round of elections.

But not, G-6 candidate, Ms Soheyla Jelowdarzadeh is ahead of 'Abdollah Nuri. It is then when extraordinary campaign was launched for Nuri.

Yesterday late evening results indicate that JRM could not do a good job on the polling booths in the provinces and so far just 40 candidates could get seats in the 270-member house.

The situation of the G-6 in the provinces is not clear as this faction hurriedly decided to run the election and could not announce the names of its candidates.

The G-6, however gave support to some of the candidates in the provincial constituencies. But it is not clear whether they will remain loyal to the G-6 or not.

The reason is that the G-6 future is also uncertain. And, moreover, there are many known leftists among the G-6 list such as former Labour Minister Abolqassem Srahadizadeh, Ms Jelowdarzadeh and Majid Ansari. A moderate, Hoseyn Mar'ashi is also among the G-6.

With this make-up, how long the G-6 lawmakers will go along with them is to be seen and interesting, an observer commented.

"There are many G-6 members who do not agree to the economic plan of President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani," he said.

Who achieved majority in the Majles? The answer will be known when the election for the post of the Majles Speaker will be held.

Another aspect of the run-offs is that the female candidates have drawn considerably more attention of the voters compared to the previous elections.

For example, Ms Marziyeh Vahid-Dastjerdi was placed third among the winners from Tehran. She defected from the G-6 on the eve of the run-off.

Religious city of Mashhad also sent a female representative to the Majles and a female member in Orumiyeh also leading in the last Friday elections.

This time, voters turn-out was much lesser than the March 8 elections. [passage omitted]

Iran: Voting Ends; Uncertainty Looms Over Majles Composition

LD2204200396 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 20 Apr 96 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Voting Ends, Uncertainty Looms Over Make-Up of Majles"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TEHRAN — Voters for 123 seats of the Fifth Term of the Majles cast their ballot papers yesterday with a call by Speaker of the out-going legislative body to "vote for those who do not want to compromise with the United States."

Majles affairs experts believe that traditional rightists, Jameh-ye Rowhanyat-e Mobarez [JRM — Militant Clergy Association] will maintain their majority in the next Majles also.

"It's too early to go into details about the make-up of the next Majles," an expert answered when asked to forecast on the possible division of seats among the JRM, the G-6 and independents.

"You know, there are many elected members on G-6 support who now have changed their loyalties and joined the ranks of the JRM," he said.

NEWS ANALYSIS

The G-6 has been under fire by the rivals who accused them of abusing public funds in the election campaign.

The Servants of Construction or the G-6 are also under fire as it was said by their rivals that they are looking for Western style political system in Iran. The G-6 leaders such as Morteza Alviri denied the charges, saying that they firmly believe in the country's Constitution.

Tehran Justice Department last week announced that it initiated legal action against around 200 violators of the election laws.

The next Majles will go into operation on May 27.

High ranking officials visited polling stations in Tehran yesterday to make sure of the integrity of the elections.

Majles Speaker Nateq-Nuri said: "The Leader of the Islamic Republic had clearly defined the required doctrinal convictions of the Majles deputies, namely they should be ideologically of the values of the Islamic Revolution."

First Deputy President Hasan Habibi hoped that people would consider it their religious obligation and national

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duty to cast their votes at the polling stations, according to IRNA.

Along with the Majles polling, elections for the 83-member assembly of experts were also held in the provinces of Tehran and Mazandaran to elect two representatives to replace the late Hojjat ol-Eslam Ahmad Khomeini and Ayatollah Mohammad Hoseyn Laeini.

The elections to a second term of the assembly of experts were held on Oct. 8, 1990.

The G-6, however, accused their rivals of seeking to monopolize power in Iran and describe defection of some of their candidates as 'immoral'.

So far four known hopefuls announced their disassociation from the G-6 on charges that the servants of construction have spent exorbitant money on the election campaign and abused public funds.

President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani is believed to be supporter of the G-6. While casting his vote yesterday early morning appealed to both the factions 'not to have hostility against each other and work side by side ... No matter what the election results are...'

An expert believes that the make-up of the future Majles will be clear during the election for the next speaker of the Majles.

JRM is fielding the name of Nateq-Nuri while G-6 announced that it will propose the name of former Interior Minister Abdollah Nuri if he wins yesterdays second round of election for the Tehran constituency.

Another expert of the Majles affairs contested the opinion saying: "No, it will take some more time to have a clear picture of the make-up of the future parliament".

"Both sides are exerting pressure on the winners to associate with them and only time will present a true picture of the future make-up of the Majles", he said.

There are observers in Tehran who believe that the Guardians Council will cancel the results of G-6 winners if the accusations made against them are proved correct.

A total of 246 contenders are fighting for 123 seats in the 270-member house undecided in the first round of elections held on March 8.

In Tehran, 56 candidates vied for 28 seats.

"The elections in Tehran are always crucial and determine the future administrative body of the assembly," an observer said. He meant that speaker and his deputies are elected from the Tehran constituency.

"This election (for the fifth term) will also determine the fate of next year's presidential election," he said.

By-elections will also be held in five months to decide 13 seats in provinces where elections of the first round were cancelled by the Guardians Council.

All Iranians, aged 15 and over, were entitled to vote.

Iran: Justice Department Head's Remarks Lauded

NC2404060696 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 10 Apr 96 pp 1, 16

[Editorial by Mahmud Farshidi: "Long Live Justice"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Most of the people who have been arrested are people from the Tehran Municipality who were campaigning in favor of the Kargozaran [Servants of Construction]. Tehran Municipality ranked first among government organizations in numbers of violations. This was stated by the head of Tehran's Justice Department.

Beginning the same day that a number of officials decided to form a political group and to participate in the elections, many well-wishers warned them against this decision and its consequences. But unfortunately they were unsuccessful. Now the head of the Tehran Justice Department has revealed facts that are shocking and unbelievable on the one hand and encouraging on the other. His remarks are encouraging in that they show that the judiciary branch is decisively acting as the pulse of the Islamic system in the elections, without being intimidated by political pressures and is defending the "people's trust." But the question and concern is why some people, namely in the Tehran Municipality, should feel immune to the law and feel above it?!

If all the citizens gave themselves the right to show such disrespect for the law, what kind of chaos would ensue? God knows what the individual or individuals who give themselves the right in the most open manifestation of the people's presence and before the eyes of the Council of Guardians and the Interior Ministry to break the law will do in other cases when they face the people, not in a collective manner, but on an individual basis! We know that it is not possible for the Islamic system to assign a venerable and solemn angel to each and every official to prevent him from violating the law. Observing the law should be a code of behavior for the officials, and the higher their rank, the more they should obey the law. Didn't the late Imam, may his soul be sanctified, observe the regulations of the Islamic Republic more than anyone else? And isn't the esteemed leader a good example of this? Why should some people resort to group inclinations and fail to defend the credibility of the Islamic system?

Meanwhile, we should not ignore the negative cultural impact that such illegal behavior has. When the people

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see that some officials are ignoring the Islamic system's regulations for the sake of their personal and group interests, will they not resurrect the thought that prevailed during the past regime that the law applies only to the ordinary people and not to the officials?! At any rate, in examining the case of such violations we should not ignore the repercussions that such breaches of the law will have on our social culture and beliefs.

It now becomes clear why some people refrained from using the word justice in the hasty process of development that they had in mind. This is because if there is justice, it will not allow anyone to exploit his power to try to buy the people's votes with money—and not even his own money, but the public's money—and to use public facilities for the benefit of his group.

In his news conference yesterday, the head of Tehran's Justice Department called on the Kargozaran to control the people under their jurisdiction in order to confront such shortcomings so that violations will not be committed in their name. Therefore, it is expected that the executive branch will follow up this issue and will help the judiciary branch, because many of the violations can be identified and can be confronted before they come to light and question the credibility of the system. One of the most basic principles of management is that the managers should confront violations themselves. Relying on others to identify and to confront violations is a sign of weakness or bad management.

At any rate, the courageous head of the Tehran Justice Department should be sincerely thanked for having revealed bitter truths in his efforts to safeguard the values of the revolution. Now it is the duty of all the forces that sympathize with the revolution and have suffered for it to seek a remedy and not allow people to resort to commotion and uproar to hide these truths. Our people sincerely love the decisive and revolutionary judges and consider them to be the true defenders of Islamic values. The remarks by Hojjat ol-Eslam Razini have further increased this belief, this love, and this hope.

Nepal & Bhutan

Nepal: Editorial Views Prime Minister's PRC Visit

BK2304130696 Kathmandu THE KATHMANDU POST in English 23 Apr 96

[Editorial: "Adding New Vista" — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba concludes what can be termed a successful official visit to China. As there are no outstanding problems between Nepal and its immediate neighbour to the north, China, the relations between Nepal and China cannot but grow deeper with the passage of time. The age old bonds of friendship that bind the two countries, however, needs to be nourished and cultivated from time to time. The main objective of the Prime Minister's visit to Beijing was, therefore, to give a fresh impetus to the friendship between the two countries. Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba, in an interview with this newspaper, has, therefore, assessed his visit as marking a "watershed" in the relations between the two countries. He had made this observation after completing substantial part of his visit to China and his talks with top Chinese leaders were over. How much of an "watershed" the visit has been will depend on how well the two countries implement the three accords signed by both sides during the Prime Minister's visit. Particularly important is the Nepal-China Non-governmental Forum. The forum could prove to be a very useful instrument in guiding the relations between the two countries including economic interactions on much more solid grounds. But what is important is that the governments of the two countries must back the forum totally and approve of all efforts towards deepening the bilateral friendship.

The other accord signed between the two countries relates to the creation of bilateral consultation mechanism at the foreign secretary level. This official consultation should help clear any misgivings one country might have against some policies affecting the other. Though such misgivings between the two countries are only a few and far between, it will nevertheless help in clearing the air whenever such occasions arise. Understandably, but unfortunate misgivings and misunderstandings can arise from time to time even among the best of friends. The Prime Minister, in this regard, has done well to assure the Chinese leaders that Nepal, in keeping with its time tested policy, will not allow its territory to be used for anti-Chinese activities. Indeed Nepal has been adhering strictly to its policy of not allowing its territory to be used against any of its neighbours. That China showed full appreciation of this policy is a measure of the success of Nepal's policy of cultivating friendship with all countries.

On the economic front, there is much that needs to be done to correct the imbalance in trade between the two countries. Though Nepal had been facing deficit in its trade with China as a whole, there was a surplus in the Kingdom's trade with the Tibet Autonomous Region. This too is now in deficit. Though the trade deficit is not as alarming as with some other countries, it is, however, a matter that needs the immediate attention of authorities in both countries. Considering that Nepal has extensive relations at various levels with China, the two must also consider what can be done to enhance

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border trade. But apart from all this, periodic exchange of visits at various levels specially at the people's level must be encouraged so that the relations with the two close neighbours is not confined to state level. For, the relations at the peoples level are not only more extensive but also more permanent. Over the years, Nepal and China have proved themselves to be reliable and tested friends. The Deuba visit has successfully highlighted this aspect.

Pakistan

Pakistan: Kashmiris Vow To Continue Struggle; 50 Injured in Blast

BK1904112996 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan has again expressed grave concern over ruthless repression of Kashmiris by the Indian troops in occupied Kashmir. Speaking at the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva, the leader of the Pakistan delegation, Senator Iqbal Haider, said 50,000 innocent Kashmiri Muslims have been killed and several thousands tortured and injured in the continuing repression. He supported the Kashmiri leaders' memorandum presented to the OIC [Organization of the Islamic Conference] contact group last Monday demanding the exercise of the right of self-determination by the Kashmiris.

The Kashmiri leaders have declared that their struggle would continue till India quit Kashmir and the Kashmir issue is resolved in accordance with their wishes. A spokesman of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, Professor Abdul Ghani, told newsmen in Srinagar after the release of six arrested leaders that peace in the region depended on the settlement of the Kashmir issue. He said Hurriyat Conference would soon announce its program against the polls.

Meanwhile, about 50 people were injured in a big blast at the general bus stand in Hindwara. The blast was believed by local people to be the work of Indian agents to spread horror.

Pakistan: Improved Relations With Russia Sought 'in All Spheres'

BK2004152196 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 20 Apr 96 pp 1, 10

[Report by Shakil Shaikh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad — The entire gambit of Pakistan-Russia relations will be taken up for discussion when Foreign Secretary Najamuddin Shaikh will visit Moscow "very soon."

Confirming his visit to Moscow, a spokesman of the Foreign Office told The News on Friday [19 April] that "it is a happy development following Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmed Ali's visit to Moscow in July 1994."

After a gap of about 7 years, the foreign secretary will lead a Pakistani delegation to Russia. "We are finalising the dates of this visit," said the spokesman.

Last time such a visit took place when former foreign secretary Tavir Ahmed Khan, now Pakistan's ambassador to Moscow, visited Russia in 1989, which was preceded by the then foreign secretary Abdul Sattar's visit to USSR in 1986.

According to informed circles, the item on top of the agenda for discussions will be "the issue of the Russian air-crew held by the Taleban for several months."

Arms purchase matters, including Pakistan's desire to acquire Russian aircraft, will also figure prominently in these talks. "Pakistan wants to acquire sophisticated arms from Russia, as Islamabad has already embarked on an exercise to diversify its sources for acquiring arms," said officials sources, who hope that "Pakistan would able to strike an arms deal with Russia."

Despite the exchange of several bilateral visits between the two countries, both Russia and Pakistan have not been able to forge defence relations. "Now we are hopeful of making program in this regard", said officials privy to this development.

The foreign secretary's visit, said the sources, will provide a good opportunity to improve Pakistan-Russia relations in all spheres.

Other issues likely to be discussed include the Afghan problem, threats to the soft "under-belly" of the Commonwealth of Independent States including the Tajik problem, peace and stability in the South Asian region, bilateral matters, and trade and economic issues. "The Kashmir issue will definitely figure in these talks, with the foreign secretary apprising the Russian leaders of the gross human rights violations in Indian Held Kashmir and seeking Russian influence to be used on New Delhi for resolving the problem under UN resolutions," said the sources.

The delegation to Moscow will include the director-Russia in the Foreign Office and Pakistan's ambassador tc Moscow.

The have been very few high-profile visits between the two countries in the recent past. Former Russian foreign minister Kozyrev visited Pakistan in April 1993, which was followed by caretaker foreign minister Abdul Sattar's visit to Moscow in Aug, deputy foreign minister

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of Russia visited Pakistan in May 1994. Pakistan's Foreign Minister visited Moscow in July 1994. A Russian leader also took part in the 3rd round of talks on Tajikistan held in Islamabad. Informed circles say that the proposed visit of Benazir Bhutto to Russia may take place after presidential elections in Russia.

Pakistan: Islamabad To Seek Moscow's Support in Afghan Talks

BK2204124196 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 22 Apr 96 pp 1,5

[Article by Aroosa Alam]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ISLAMABAD, April 21: After having secured enough support from USA, Iran and other important countries in the region for holding intra-Afghan talks Pakistan will be dispatching its Foreign Secretary to Moscow to muster Russia's support on the modalities of such a conference in or outside Afghanistan.

In an exclusive telephonic interview with THE MUSLIM on Sunday [21 April] evening, the Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmed Ali said Pakistan's proposals for holding such a conference and subsequent transfer of power had enough political and moral support from USA, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Central Asian States. However [words indistinct] of the Afghan parties including that of President Rabbani are not agreeing at the moment for such a conference, it becomes imperative to take Moscow into confidence on the issue. He said Moscow yields enough political influence with Rabbani government and we are hopeful that Moscow will prevail upon Kabul government and those Afghan parties who are not ready to participate in the peace process.

The Foreign Minister said the Foreign Secretary will carry a three-point proposal with a view to have Moscow's consent to hold such a meeting in Islamabad

Articulating these points the Foreign Minister said these include:

(a) All Afghan groups who are in control of various provinces of Afghanistan including President Rabbani should be given share in the interim government without any discrimination,

(b) all the main political parties which include the 8 parties in the previous interim government must be presented in the broad-based government,

(c) a neutral peace-keeping force should take over Kabul from the existing groups and forces there and in the final settlement whatever Afghans decide for themselves should follow the above-mentioned process.

He said the neutral force could be the UN forces or the OIC forces and if these were not available then a regional force comprising forces of Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, UAE and even of Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and other countries of the region could contribute to the neutral force. But he said all these proposals are subject to the approval of major Afghan leaders. He said Pakistan's perception of restoring peace and lasting stability also contains demilitarisation of Kabul and its outskirts. He said the selection of a new President for the broad-based interim government must be left to the people of Afghanistan.

He said the Foreign Secretary will also carry with him the objective analysis of Afghan issue and its impact on the economic and other developments of the region. He said during his discussions with Russian authorities Secretary Najamuddin will highlight the fact that due to evil war in Afghanistan, the economic and political stability of not duly this region but also of the CIS region is at stake. He said we would tell the Russian leadership that the net result of civil war in Afghanistan means the continuation of civil war in Tajikistan and this could precipitate the danger of instability to CIS.

He said Secretary Sheikh will also throw light on the fact that all Russian trade routes leading to Gulf, Indian Ocean and Europe pass through Afghanistan and without restoring peace in Afghanistan, Russia could never taste the fruits of free market economy and economy prosperity.

The Foreign Minister pointed out that Russia could annually export 3 to 4 billion US dollars worth of oil from Siberia through Afghanistan. He disclosed that the Siberian pipeline terminates in Charzau in Turkmenistan and this could be expanded to Gwader port. This would result in immediate export by Russia of half a million barrel per day.

The Foreign Minister said so far Pakistan proposals have received favourable response from [word indistinct], OIC [Organization of Islamic Conference] and other countries or the region which are directly effected with the civil war in Afghanistan. He said in my own humble judgment civil war in Afghanistan is a state of stalemate with no group likely to emerge victor. He said all parties to the conflict now realise and this could help the peace process.

The Foreign Minister said Pakistan sincerely feels that intra- Afghan conference should be held inside Afghanistan but if Pakistan requires to host it, Islamabad will facilitate any process which leads to peace in Afghanistan.

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He said that Pakistan has no animosity with Rabbani government and we are keen to maintain friendly relations with Kabul.

The Foreign Minister said it was due to Pakistan's relentless efforts that has brought about the renewed international interest in Afghanistan. He particularly mentioned the Iranian efforts. He pointed out that several US officials have been engaged in talks in Afghanistan. He said all this has helped the peace process.

The minister said before his visit to USA some three months back, the Afghan issue was virtually put in the cold storage by the superpowers. He said he met several State Department and White House officials to discuss various ways and means for restoring peace in Afghanistan. He said his visits to Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and other countries of the region were also aimed at working out a mechanism for an intra-Afghan dialogue to resolve the issue.

Pakistan: French Built Mine-Hunter Commissioned in Navy

BK2104095896 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Le Havre, another mine-hunter was inducted in Pakistan Navy [PN]. This is the second mine-hunter of Pakistan Navy called PNS [Pakistan Naval Ship] Muhafiz. The mine hunter was formally handed over to Pakistan Navy at a special commission ceremony held at Le Havre. The ceremony was attended by the chief of Pakistan Navy and French Naval chief, besides high officials of both the countries. The mine-hunter PNS Muhafiz will now proceed to Belgium for work up training and will reach Pakistan in the month of September. Building of the third mine-hunter PNS Mujahid is currently at progress at PN dockyard, Karachi, under a transfer of technology agreement signed between the two countries.

Pakistan: Bhutto Says India Training 'Terrorists'

BK2204120396 Islamabad THE NATION in English 22 Apr 96 pp 1,5

[Report by THE NATION correspondent in Lahore]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has categorically said that India is training terrorists to create trouble in Sindh, opposing Brown Amendment and using undiplomatic language against Pakistan's Prime Minister because we are not accepting India's hegemonistic designs

"All this is being done to check Bhutto's daughter who wants to make Pakistan a strong and a modern nation," she said. She was addressing at the foundation-stone laying ceremony of 117 MW power project near Raiwind on Sunday.

She said that her government would not compromise with terrorists and vowed to purge the country from separate elements.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in her 15-minute speech described with pride the achievements of her government during her three-year rule. She also praised her party workers who stood by her against dictators during their struggle for restoration of democracy in the country.

She said that her government during its three-year tenure brought relief to commoners besides introducing modern gadgets like Fax, cellular phones Pagers Satellite transmission and FM Radio. "We launched mass development projects like Indus Highway, Mass transit train, Ghazi Barotha hydel power project, heavy mechanical complex, Gwadr deep sea port and airports at Sehwan Sharif and Pakpattan."

While counting her government's economic achievements the Prime Minister said that Pakistan has given back loans worth $1 billion, domestic borrowing has been checked along with commercial rate credits while sky-rocketing inflation was brought down to 9 per cent from 13 per cent and above all Gross Domestic product (GDP) has crossed the target of 6 per cent.

Prime Minister said Pakistan is included among 10 emerging capital markets, due to its aggressive economic policies which her government launched.

She said: "I am pleased to inaugurate another power project as another MoU [Memorandum of Understanding] has been translated into a project." She said up till now 9 power projects have completed their financial close which was the success of March 1994 energy policy.

Jubilant Prime Minister asked her opponents that "if the MoUs were just a piece of paper what they have to say now." She said that her government has also attracted investment in the oil and gas sectors.

Prime Minister while matching her government achievements with the past regimes said, "they did nothing for the country as they rendered the economy bankrupt, people suffered due to cooperative societies and Taj Company scams in which billions of rupees savings of depositors were misappropriated and introduced loadshedding and power shutdowns.

Benazir Bhutto said that government wants to pull out the nation from crisis of energy shortage, that is why energy policy was introduced in March 1994.

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Coming back towards her political opponents, she said our opponents created menace of loadshedding, gave away Siachin to India, watched cricket matches with Indian Prime Minister, filled the streets of Karachi with blood, kidnapped MNA [member of National Assembly], MPAs and instituted fake cases against PPP [Pakistan People's Party] leaders. She said in that era of darkness, separatists movements took birth, and extremist elements emerge but Pakistanis know who they are and that was why people rejected them.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto said that her awami government saved Pakistan from all sorts of dangers. She said "now the Kashmir issue is alive, now there is no threat of declaring Pakistan a terrorist state, and now no can use our soil for terrorism."

Benazir Bhutto said that she would make Pakistan a modern and prosperous nation.

Earlier, Southern Electric Power Company Limited President Ali Mehmood said that land of investment thus has been committed to Pakistan in the last 2 years as a result of government policies was an exceptional achievement.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto returned to Islamabad after paying a short visit to Lahore and than Raiwind for foundation stone laying ceremony of a private sector power generation project. Before leaving for Islamabad, the Prime Minister held a meeting with Punjab Governor Raja Saroop, Chief Minister Arif Nakai, Senior Minister Mushtaq Awan and high officials of the Punjab Government.

The Prime Minister was briefed by the IGP [Inspector General of Police] on the law and order situation of the province and the steps government has taken to curb terrorism.

The IGP also informed the Prime Minister about the progress in the investigation of Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital bomb explosion.

The Prime Minister directed the Governor to personally look after the law and order of the province while directing the administration to be vigilant vis-a-vis any possible act of terrorism besides checking the ordinary crime rate.

She also asked the administration to ensure security of prominent private and public sector buildings.

Pakistan: U.S. Release of Arms 'Major Step Forward'

BK2104103196 Islamabad THE NATION in English 21 Apr 96 pp 1, 11

[Report by Ahmed Rashid: "U.S. Arms Release Signals New Kind of Relationship"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad — In three weeks time the first crates of American-made arms and spare parts will begin loading onto ships at US east coast ports and head towards Pakistan. It will be the first time in six years that such shipments will take place. Washington's decision to release the 368 million dollars worth of equipment is a major step forward in a US-Pakistan relationship that has been dogged with uncertainty, much recrimination on both sides and strategic self-doubt for many Pakistanis. The significance is that it happened at all, at a time when the ring magnet issue still hangs fire, both India and Pakistan are suspected of preparing for nuclear tests, Pakistan still refuses to sign CTBT [Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty] unilaterally and there is no progress on Indo-Pakistan detente.

For the prophets of doom who doubted the veracity of US commitments and would like to see an end to the Pakistani military's reliance on the US it is a significant slap in the face. But neither does it signal the renewal of a major strategic partnership in the region or a return to the pre-Cold War cosiness between the two states. It is a major foreign policy achievement of the government of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, but it signals a new kind of relationship, that Pakistan's foreign policy establishment will have to build on in the future in the South Asia region.

The equipment — $191 million for the navy which includes 3 P-3 Orion aircraft, $98.8 million for the air force and $77.4 million for the army — will come after due inspections will ensure that Pakistan does not receive malfunctioning parts and weapons. The US has permitted full inspection rights by Pakistani military experts who will determine the condition of the equipment before accepting it. Pakistan can reject equipment it considers too old or in a deteriorated condition because of age, but no upgrades of equipment will be possible because the Pressler Amendment is still in force. After much deliberation within the armed forces, Pakistan will also take the three P-3 Orion naval surveillance aircraft as the cabinet has sanctioned funds for the necessary infrastructure to maintain them and give them the necessary air cover, during their patrolling of Pakistan's coastline over the Gulf.

Pakistan will also receive a refund of 124 million dollars in two cheques by June, which will be for equipment

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ordered but not made or delivered. Other refunds reaching a possible total of $280 million could follow if more equipment is rejected and as the accounting process of military sales that have not been delivered proceeds. Pakistan will provide the US with a list of items not required by the navy and the air force and the US will try to get them diverted to other customers so that Pakistan can get the money back for these items. Similarly spare parts for the Brooke-Garcia frigates that Pakistan had leased from the US but has now returned will also be diverted to other customers.

However, Pakistan is still waiting for US implementation of other major items on the Brown Amendment which are still pending and depend on the outcome of the ring magnet issue. These items include the revival of IMET [International Military Education and Training] or military training programmes for Pakistani officers in the US, but at Pakistan's expense and the vital reinsurance cover to be given to US companies investing in Pakistan. Both issues are covered in the Brown Amendment and have been passed by Congress and President Clinton, but because they are related to controls over nuclear proliferation covered in the Symington Amendment, their ratification will have to wait until US Secretary of State Warren Christopher makes a final assessment whether Pakistan broke US laws over obtaining ring magnets from China for its nuclear programme. Pakistan denies that it has obtained the magnets and so far the US has produced no evidence that it did so.

Christopher's delay in issuing a verdict on the ring magnet issue, which could mean limited sanctions on both China and Pakistan, has certainly helped Islamabad and resulted in the US administration taking considerable flak from Congress and the US media.

The delay in passing judgment could continue indefinitely but, say diplomats, the ring magnet issue could be totally subsumed in coming months as the MFN [most favored nation] debate for China starts hotting up in Congress. The debate about the US granting China "Most Favoured Nation" status is an annual issue that heats up tensions between Congress and the US administration. The anti-China lobby in Congress has been riled up, with China having slapped down the US on several counts in recent weeks. Beijing has just reneged on its deal to buy the US-made Boeing aircraft and has instead signed a $2 billion deal to buy the European made Airbus. Beijing has also refused to divulge any information on its nuclear related sale or help to Pakistan's nuclear programme, despite considerable US pressure and China has refused to help out the US on the ring magnet issue.

The F-16 issue is still pending. Pakistan has several choices over the next few months as to how to retrieve the $658 million Islamabad paid for the 28 F-16s. Contradicting recent press speculation, senior government officials discount suing the US for the moment, at least as long the weapons package of US $368 million is not fully returned to Pakistan. One possibility being mooted is lobbying the US administration and legislators for a new Amendment to go through the US legislatures which would return the planes as another one off deal. The passage of the Brown Amendment means that this is not impossible, although it could take two years or more and would involve another massive diplomatic effort in Washington by Pakistani officials.

Another alternative is to persuade the US administration to back a fresh Amendment in place of Pressler, which would maintain US legislation on non proliferation but eliminate the Pakistan specific clauses of Pressler, thereby allowing Pakistan to retrieve the F-16s.

Both moves are fraught with problems, not least in an election year in the US and because of the suspicions about Pakistan's nuclear programme, opposition by the growing non-proliferation and anti-China lobby and India's strong objections to any such move.

For the moment Pakistan has to depend on the Clinton promise to sell the planes to third parties and return the money to Pakistan. But for five year old planes this is going to prove difficult. Senior officials say that Indonesia is likely to buy 9 of the 28 F-16s that Pakistan has paid for but which are now in storage. The major problem is that the Indonesians are asking for US credit to buy the planes and that is proving difficult for the administration to accept. However, after five years in storage the price deferential is enormous. In 1989 Pakistan paid an estimated 17 million dollars for each stripped down F-16, without the package of accompanying parts and training. Today the Indonesians are only willing to offer $9 million per plane. Although the Clinton administration is committed to make up the cash difference once the planes are sold, it is a long process and there is no guarantee that the planes will be sold.

In the meantime, say Western diplomats, the US is maintaining pressure on the Indian government not to produce or deploy the Prithvi missiles, especially important at a time when a beleaguered Prime Minister Narasimha Rao is seeking reelection and could use the missile issue to drum up votes from the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] camp.

However, Washington is also desperately keen that Rao gets re-elected and for that reason it will do nothing to overtly embarrass the Indian government or squeeze

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Rao further until the election results are known. "Rao has got away with much more vis-a-vis Pakistan, such as threatening to test a nuclear device, continuing tests of Prithvi and taking a hard line at the CTBT conference because the US is extremely worried at the possibilities of him loosing the elections," said a senior Pakistani official. The release of the Pakistani equipment has been a major blow to India.

Even though India recognises that the equipment does not alter the military balance in the region in India's favour, it reflects a failure of the Rao government position and has proved an embarrassment — a fact that can be judged by India's reaction. Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee threatened that the delivery of US arms to Pakistan could be a prelude to the first arms race in the region since the end of the Cold War and described it as "unfortunate and unwise". Diplomatic sources say New Delhi was taken aback at the US decision to release the equipment when the ring magnet issue was still pending. It is not without significance that the election manifestoes of both Congress and the BJP alert the world that India could go nuclear at any time and that heavy outlays on defense will be maintained and even increased. Both parties are playing the Pakistan card to the hilt in the run up to the elections.

The new US-Pakistan relationship needs to be taken in perspective and cannot become a substitute for a comprehensive foreign policy approach towards the South Asian region, which the government has so far lacked. Pakistan needs to make peace in Afghanistan, rebuild relations with Iran, secure avenues of access to Central Asia and have a more comprehensive and realistic policy towards India and the Kashmir issue. At the same time Islamabad must be conscious that the US neither willing, nor able nor keen to maintain a relationship with a country that is a regional liability.

The US is not going to make peace with India on Pakistan's behalf, nor is it going to pull Pakistan's failed policy in Afghanistan out of the fire. If the delivery of US weapons has given the Pakistani establishment some renewed confidence of Western support, it should use that to make peace in the region as a whole.

Pakistan: Leghari Comments on Brown Amendment, U.S. Role in Region

BK2204142596 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari has said Pakistan and the United States have very long and close relationship and have many commonalities like their love and respect for democracy, equity, and justice. He was talking to a delegation of young political leaders from the United States who called on him in Islamabad today.

The president said the passage of the Brown Amendment is a step forward to revive the friendship between the two countries, which had been marred by the Pakistan-specific Pressler Amendment. The president said Pakistan wants the United States to play a major role for peace and stability in the region. He said we have requested the United States to mediate between India and Pakistan for peaceful solution of the Kashmir problem in accordance with the United Nations resolutions. He hoped the United States would also use its influence for peace in Afghanistan under the United Nations umbrella, in which the interests of all major ethnic and linguistic groups are taken into account.

Pakistan: Editorial—U.S. Official's Kashmir Statement 'Wishy-Washy'

BK2404073096 Islamabad THE NATION in English 23 Apr 96 p 8

[Editorial: "Robin Raphel on Kashmir"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, Ms Robin Raphel, in reply to a question, has said that if the Kashmiris participate in the proposed elections in the Held Kashmir, the US would accept the result as valid. It is possible that the question was not framed properly enough to elicit a clear reply, or its significance was not understood by Ms Raphel for her to explain the nature of the validity that she had conferred on it, but her answer has raised doubts that need to be clarified. The official stance of the US Government so far has been that Kashmir being a disputed territory, its future has yet to be decided according to the wishes of the people.

Ms Raphel reiterated that position before answering the question to show that there has been no shift in the US stand, but since neither in her reiteration there has been any mention of the UN resolutions on Kashmir, nor has she now said that local elections have local importance, the only interpretation to which her present statement lends itself is that the results of such elections are acceptable to the US as reflecting the true wishes of the Kashmiri people about their future. The question then would be whether the US feels that there is no difference in elections held under the supervision of the UN and those held under the supervision of an army that even her own department sees as guilty of large-scale violation of human rights.

Secondly, she knows as well as her government, that all the major political parties of Kashmir, as represented by the Hurriyat Conference, as also the pro-India National

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Conference of the Indian stooge, Farooq Abdullah, have boycotted the polls. So what credibility, if any, is left for her to say that the verdict of the polls would be acceptable to her government.

Thirdly, even if it is accepted that the polls would be fair and the voter turnout reasonable, how does such an exercise become a substitute for a plebiscite. The issues in a local election are generally of an economic nature, the issue in a plebiscite is of joining one country or another.

At stake, as Ms Raphel knows well, is the destiny of a people and not whether the Dal Lake should be cleaned of pollution or the level of taxation on the people should be higher or lower? Again, for a country like the US to condone the illegal occupation of a territory, to accept forty thousand civilian deaths at the hands of an ethnically-motivated repressive army, to accept polls about the validity of which there is widespread skepticism, and to ignore the role of the UN, is amazing. Even the Indian Election Commissioner has said that fair polls cannot be held in the conditions prevailing in the Valley. It has not even allotted election symbols to the candidates that India has put up. The whole election process is pre-rigged, even in the eyes of the Indians and here is Ms Raphel blithely coming up with the statement that if the Kashmiris vote, the US will accept it. Accept what, one may ask. If the US wants a cover to acquiesce to Indian conquest of Kashmir, it should come out openly with that. One expects a principled, a just and an enlightened approach from the US and not such wishy-washy statements.

Pakistan: Editorial Defends Islamabad's CTBT Stance to U.S. Official

BK2404071696 Peshawar THE FRONTIER POST in English 23 Apr 96 p 6

[Editorial: "An Unfair Stance"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] US ASSISTANT Secretary of State for South Asia Robin Raphel's advice to Islamabad not to link the signing of the CTBT [Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty] with the Indian position on the issue, though couched in a very subtle and circulatory phraseology, amounts in effect to asking Pakistan for a unilateral acceptance of the treaty. Talking to newsmen at Islamabad she said, "We have asked Pakistan to consider carefully its full-range interests in deciding what it will do in terms of signing the CTBT if the government of India decided not to sign", adding, however, that "we would want India to sign even if Pakistan does not sign (and) we would like Pakistan to sign even if India does not sign". She hinted also at the effects the Symington Amendment could have on some parts of the Brown Amendment in the context of the ring magnets issue. The general drift of Ms Raphel's remarks left no doubt as to what she was driving at.

Islamabad's position on the CTBT is based on sound logic and common sense. It believes that implementation or the treaty needs to have a regional orientation to deter a nuclear arms race in South Asia while New Delhi has cleverly fashioned its stance in a global perspective to escape the strait-jacket of the new regime. There is absolutely no ambiguity in the Indian stand on the issue because New Delhi has simply refused even to consider it. Ms Raphel's optimism that "we would want India to sign even if Pakistan does not sign" therefore appears merely to be a hyperbole, to put it mildly. India today is threatening to trigger a nuclear cum-missile race in the region. It gate-crashed the exclusive nuclear club way back in 1974 with the explosion of a peaceful device" (manufactured with active Western assistance) and has since launched on an ambitious missile programme which has already tipped the regional power balance to an alarming degree. And the planned second nuclear blast by India is going to prove yet another major tension escalator in South Asia. Pakistan's concern for its genuine security needs should therefore not be misconstrued, least of all by Washington. Over the years Pakistan has been put in the dock on one pretext or the other. The latest issue has been the ring magnets controversy which took on an added prominence during the recent Sino-US standoff in the Taiwan Strait. Earlier, it was the [word indistinct] irritant which had been found conveniently handy to beat Pakistan with. In addition to the Pressler sanctions, Islamabad has had to labour under discriminatory MTCR [missile technology control regime] restrictions all these years which penalise only missile technology transfers but acquiesce in indigenous production of missiles. In view of such unconcealed bias, New Delhi's refusal to toe the American non-proliferation line should not surprise anybody. Ms Raphel's oblique hints of a unilateral signing of the CTBT by Islamabad reflect an unrealistic approach. Ditching an old friend yet again would be a short-sighted policy.

Pakistan: UN Delegate States Opposition to Security Council Expansion

BK2404063796 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0500 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan has reiterated that increase in the permanent membership of the Security Council would harm the interests of an overwhelming majority of members of the United Nations. Intervening in the debate on the question of equitable representation at the United Nations, Pakistan's delegate, Mr. Khalid

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Aziz Babar, said Pakistan had all along opposed the centers of privilege within the United Nations, which were anti-democratic and against sovereign equality of states. He said Pakistan supported only the increase in nonpermanent membership of the Security Council as was done in 1963.

Pakistan: 'Notorious' Arms, Drug Smuggler Killed in Karachi

BK2304131396 Islamabad THE NATION in English 23 Apr 96 pp 1, 10

[Report by THE NATION correspondent]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KARACHI—Ghulam Rasool Toora, a notorious and one of the biggest arms and drugs smuggler of this port city was shot dead along with another accomplice in an encounter with New Karachi police on Monday [22 April]. The incident took place near Shireen Jinnah Colony from where seven of his accomplices managed to escape, official sources disclosed.

SHO [Station House Officer] New Karachi Zeeshan Kazmi raided Gulshan-e-Sikandarabad (Shireen Jinnah Colony) on a tip off that notorious and most wanted person Toora was planning to distribute large quantity of drugs in the City. Later, police raided several areas.

When it surrounded the den in Qasim Colony, hidden accused opened firing at police. As a result of police firing, Ghulam Rasool alias Toora and his accomplice Zulfiqar were killed on the spot while seven others managed to flee taking the advantage of darkness they were identified as Samandar Khan, Koka, Sarwar, Azeem, Qurban Moeenuddin alias Munna, and Muhammad Shafi alias Kala Sohail.

According to police, Toora was wanted in over 22 cases of killing attempt to murder, kidnapping and unlicensed arms.

Police also recovered one mauser, one pistol, 5 maund [200 kg] charas, 390 bottles of kuppi (katachi sharab) [liquor], 44 kg opium and 1500 gallon local liquor and a large quantity of foreign wine.

Further investigations are underway.

Pakistan: ANF Arrests Key Heroin Supplier in Islamabad

BK2304131596 Islamabad THE NATION in English 23 Apr 96 pp 1, 10

[Report by Syed Nadeem]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ISLAMABAD—The Anti-Narcotics Force [ANF] has taken into custody the key character allegedly involved in one of the biggest heroin cases of the country.

Fazlur Rehman Afridi, apparently a big time government contractor, was arrested from his G-10/2 residence in the Federal Capital after the ANF came to know that he was the main source of supply of the deadly drug.

His arrest is part of the investigation into a recent case of heroin smuggling which was detected by the ANF. The heroin consignment was found lying at the Lahore Dry Port when the ANF raided the place.

Interestingly, it had been checked and cleared by the Customs officials.

A staggering 23 tons of heroin was stocked in containers but the authorities concerned had failed to notice it. Once the heroin, worth billions in the international market, was spotted, the Customs tried to take over the investigations.

The effort was overruled by the ANF men who did not trust the Customs officials intentions. Besides it was their operation and they wanted to see it to the end. The Customs did suspend three officers, responsible for checking, but they were too small a group for this level of heroin trade.

Further probing led the ANF to the forwarding company and then to a person in Faisalabad under whom the heroin had been packed. The packager then revealed that it was Fazlur Rehman Afridi who was the main source. The drug was to be shipped from Karachi to Poland for its onward marketing to Netherlands.

The ANF then brought him under surveillance and on April 11, his house was raided in G-10/2. According to the ANF sources, their team was fired upon from the house but they managed to enter and overpower him. Since then, he has been in their custody.

The wife of Fazlur Rehman Afridi maintained in a Press statement that her husband was taken away by the secret agencies because he had links with the PML [Pakistan Muslim League] (Nawaz). She says that the government was unhappy with him for acting as a contact between the FATA [Federally Administered Tribal Area] members and the opposition.

But on Monday, the ANF sources challenged her claim. They told The Nation that Fazlur Rehman was in their custody as part of their inquiry. Their view is that Fazlur Rehman's wife knows who raided their residence and why.

"She is not telling the truth and is giving the entire issue a political color," said one official. Not willing to disclose the whereabouts, he said they expected a

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major breakthrough in their investigation once Afridi's questioning was over.

Another aspect worth mentioning is that soon after the consignment was caught, a huge fire destroyed almost the entire Lahore Dry Port. The ANF officials do not rule out the possibility of more heroin stored there at the time of the haul.

"For fear of further trouble, somebody thought it suitable to get rid of the evidence, causing a loss of billions in the process," said the official. The source also denied a Press report that notorious heroin smuggler, Ayub Afridi who had surrendered himself to the US Drug Enforcement Agency in Dubai, had been released. He is still in the custody of US authorities, facing trial on charges of drug-trafficking

Pakistan: Radio Reports 'Repressive Action' in Kashmir

BK2304113296 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In occupied Kashmir, the Indian forces have intensified their repressive action in order to force the Kashmiri people to participate in the so-called elections. The Indian troops besieged a mosque in Ikhrajpura locality of Srinagar and desecrated it. The KASHMIR MEDIA SERVICE reports that the people of the area staged protest demonstration against this outrage. The freedom fighters in retaliation fired rockets on a military camp in Badshahi Bagh of Srinagar, inflicting heavy losses. The camp was extensively damaged.

Earlier, the Indian troops shot dead two young men in a raid in Ranbirsinghpura, while three more innocent people were shot dead — one each in Srinagar, Bandipura, and Taral areas. The troops also resorted to random firing in Badshahi Bagh area, injuring several people, and arrested a number of others.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: LTTE Urges Tamils To Seek Global Intervention To Halt War

BK2304133996 (Internet) Tamil Eelam News WWW in Tamil 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Fierce fighting is continuing today between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam [LTTE] and Sri Lankan troops for the third consecutive day. The LTTE has been putting up stiff resistance to the advance of the Sri Lankan troops, who are resorting to malicious missile attacks and bombing raids. It is reported that one army contingent is engaged in an attempt to advance from Puthur toward the center of Thenmarachchi while another contingent is trying to move ahead toward Tondaimanar. Several houses have been razed to the ground in Tondaimanar. Heavy missile attacks are being carried out from the Palali, Velikamam, and Elephant Pass localities. Hundreds of thousands of people are being displaced. A large number of people are waiting for the resumption of the boat service at Kilali. At the same time, attacks are also being carried out on Kilali to prevent people from proceeding to Wanni via Kilali. Six people belonging to one family were killed on the spot in a rocket attack carried out from a Mi-24 type helicopter gunship. Only one girl from that family escaped unhurt.

Four civilians, including a three-year old child, were injured in a bombing raid carried out by Pucara aircraft on a civilian settlement around 1700 yesterday evening. A Mi-24 type helicopter gunship carried out an attack on the Kilali boat jetty. There are no reports on any damage. According to available reports, so far more than 15 civilians have been killed and over 45 seriously injured in the military operation, Riviresa-2, carried out by Chandrika Kumaratunga government troops. Many more civilians are feared killed or wounded in the attacks, which have been launched at several places.

Valiant Tiger Maivizhi embraced martyrdom in the confrontation with the advancing troops. Our tributes go to this Tiger, who sacrificed herself to protect our motherland in the war of aggression launched by the enemies.

Today, Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga is leaving for China after launching the military action against the Tamil people. Although the reason for this official visit is not known, most of the Defense Ministry officials are reportedly accompanying her.

A Tamil cultural function [Muthamizh Vizha] was organized in the Canadian city of Toronto yesterday to mark the eight anniversary of the death of Mother Poopathy. K. Veeramani, general secretary of the Dravida Kazhagam party [from the Indian state of Tamil Nadu], attended this function, which was attended by more than a thousand people, and delivered the keynote address. In his address, Veeramani stressed that only with the creation of Tamil Eelam, can the Tamil world live safely.

An urgent announcement to our people:

You are requested to send telegrams and letters individually or collectively to the heads of governments or social organizations of the world appealing to them to exert pressure on the Sri Lankan Government to halt this barbaric military action undertaken by its troops against our people. Please contact our office located in your re-

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spective country to get more advice and assistance in this regard.

The Tigers' aspiration: the motherland of Tamil Eelam!

Sri Lanka: Defense Ministry Claims 'Lakhs' of People Liberated From LTTE

BK2304124296 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 23 Apr 96

[Unattributed report — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Operation Riviresa 2 troops have liberated "lakhs of people from the clutches of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam [LTTE]," the operational headquarters of the Ministry of Defence said on Monday [22 April], adding that displaced people are returning to their homes in large numbers.

It said thousands have queued to obtain clearance to return to their homes in Valikamam division, liberated last year by the security forces.

Reports reaching Colombo from the North said the LTTE had offered Rs. [rupees] 2,000 per family and ordered civilians to proceed to Kilaly so that the LTTE can ferry them to the mainland free of charge. People have protested against this move, saying they were no longer willing to obey the LTTE's orders.

There is information that a crowd of enraged civilians had beaten six LTTE cadres to death over an argument on Monday morning, the operational headquarters said.

Troops consolidated their positions on Sunday in the areas newly captured by Operation Riviresa 2.

No incidents have been reported during the day.

Troops have recovered nine highly decomposed bodies of Tigers near the Jaffna jetty and Mandaitivu Island. They also recovered some military equipment. Defence officials believe that artillery and armour fired at the Jaffna lagoon caused this damage to the rebels.

Another five decomposed bodies (one male, four female) were recovered by the Navy off Velani island in Jaffna on Monday morning. It is presumed that these rebels had been killed in a naval attack on Sea Tiger boats in Velani on Thursday. Navy personnel also recovered a radio set, 1171 rounds of 7.62 mm ammunition, 22 hand grenades and some other military equipment from the scene.

One police Special Task Force [STF] Chief Inspector, one inspector and one civilian were killed on Sunday by the LTTE in Turaivantiyamadu, about five km east of Mandoor, Batticaloa district, Eastern Province. Three STF personnel including one SI [subinspector] were wounded. The wounded were taken to the Ampara hospital.

In another incident, four soldiers were killed and five wounded on Sunday when Tigers attacked the security forces detachment at Pankulam bridge. Reinforcements which rushed to the scene from Gomarankadawala and Nikawewa successfully engaged the LTTE cadres who fled the area after a brief firefight.

Sri Lanka: 5 Tamil Parties Appeal for Government, LTTE Cease-Fire

BK2404013196 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 24 Apr 96

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Five Tamil parties, all former militant organisations, on Tuesday [23 April] issued a joint appeal to the government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) to declare a ceasefire and commence talks.

The statement was signed by the leaders of the Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP), People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOT), Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (EPRLF) and Eelam Revolutionary Organisation of Students (EROS).

It also appealed to the government and other national political parties to work out a reasonable political solution to the ethnic problem.

"The draft devolution proposals now before the Parliamentary Select Committee have to be improved to be acceptable to the Tamil people", the joint statement said.

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